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ABSTRACT

This volume is part of a series of monographs from Australia devoted to outlining an alternative approach, based on neo-Marxist concepts, to educational administration. Beginning with a discussion of the contested relationship between the individual and the state, the politics of administration is set within the debate over liberalism, Marxism and critical theory, and the crisis of the modern state. The introductory paper in this volume is a digest of the current debate on public administration and the crisis of the state, which analyzes the separation of politics and administration, the traditions of public administration, and the development of the "new" public administration resulting from impatience with the value neutrality of classical approaches to administration. Subsequent sections outline this radical approach to administration, focusing on a critique of the premises of classical administration and analyzing the dynamics of bureaucracy and the crisis of the state in late capitalist societies. Four readings by separate authors follow: (1) "Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies: Introduction," by Joel Aberbach and others; (2) "Is There a Radical Approach to Public Administation?" by Patrick Dunleavy; (3) "Senior Public Servants and the Crisis of the Late Capitalist State," by Michael Pusey; and (4) "Education, Community, and the Crisis of the State," by Richard Bates. An annotated bibliography is included. (TE)

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ESA844 Administrative Context of Schooling

Public Administration and the Crisis of the State

Richard Bates

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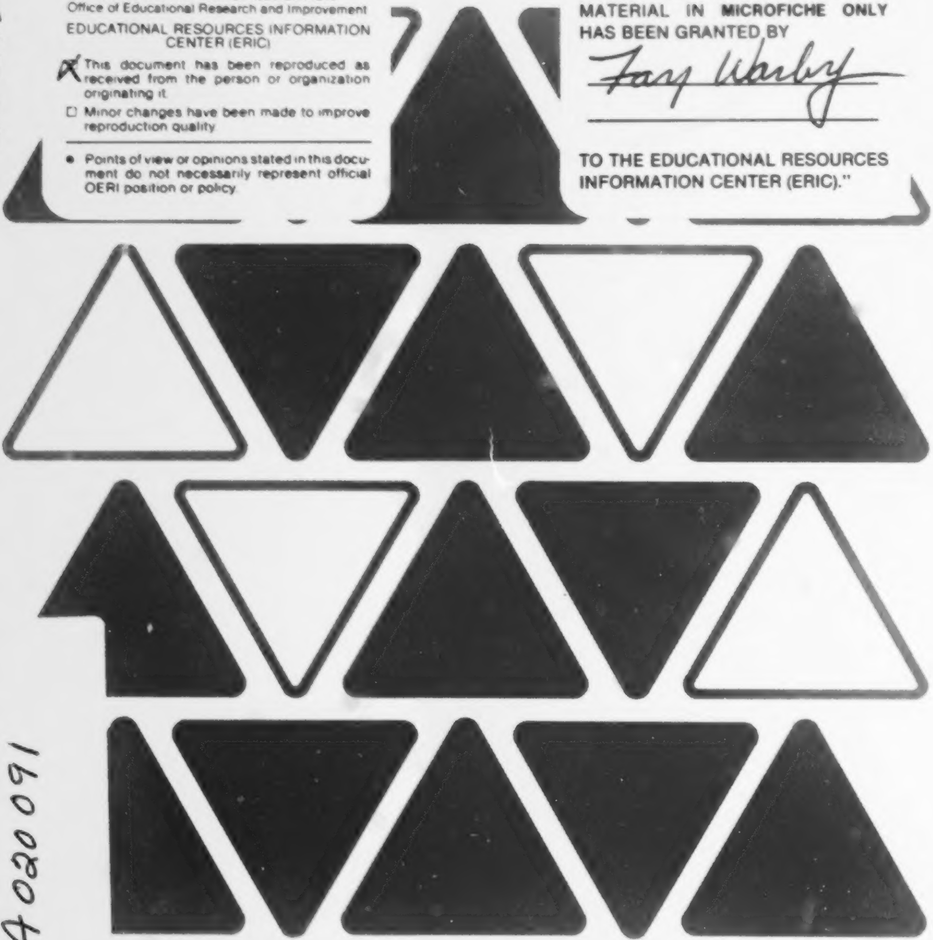

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Public Administration and the Crisis of the State

Richard Bates

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Series introduction

It is not possible to understand the nature of educational administration without understanding the broader context of public administration or, further, the social and political debate over the nature of the state, civil society and the economy, and their relationships. The series of volumes of which this book is a part addresses these various issues. Beginning with a discussion of the contested relationship between the individual and the state, the politics of administration is set within the debate over liberalism, Marxism and critical theory, and the nature of the crisis of the modern state. The impact of this crisis on public administration is then examined, especially in terms of the 'new' public administration and the notion of public good. An examination of educational administration follows, as do studies of the administrative context of curriculum and of evaluation. Finally, a discussion of the dialectical nature of educational administration is presented.

The introductory essay of each volume is a digest of current debate and a contribution to it. So that readers may enter that debate rapidly key readings are appended, as is an annotated bibliography of key works in the field. We hope that this presentation of the debate will encourage others to join in the exploration of such issues in educational administration.

Richard J Bates
Course team chairperson

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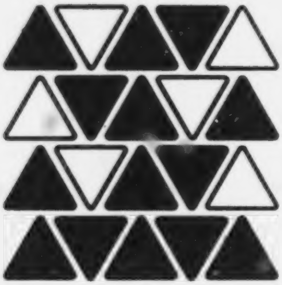
Public administration and the crisis of the state



Introduction

The study of public administration is a study of both politics and organisation. Traditionally these two aspects have been regarded as conceptually, if not practically, distinct. The foundations of the field are laid on the dichotomies that flow from this distinction: those of fact and value, ends and means, charisma and rationality, policy and execution, democracy and management. So deeply engrained are these divisions within the field that Heady, after an extensive review of public administration in various cultures could claim that:

> With few exceptions, there is common agreement transcending differences in political ideology, culture, and style, that bureaucracy should be basically instrumental in its operation—that it should serve as agent and not as master. It is almost universally expected that the bureaucracy be so designed and shaped as to respond willingly and effectively to policy leadership from outside its own ranks. The idea that bureaucratic officialdom, either civil or military, or both together, should for any extended period of time constitute the ruling class in a political system is generally rejected. The political elite may include members of the civil or military bureaucracies, but should not consist exclusively or even primarily of bureaucratic officials. Even in regimes in which a bureaucratic elite is clearly in a position of political dominance, it will rarely claim that this is the way things should be; instead, it will usually insist that such a situation can be justified only temporarily under unusual circumstances . . . All agree that the state bureaucracy should be responsible to the political leadership, however intimately it may be brought into the process of decision making by the will of the political elite.
>
> (Heady 1984, pp. 407–8)

This is not to say, as Heady recognises, that the apparent consensus on the way things should be is a guarantee that they will actually be that way. Indeed, there are grounds for believing that the distinction is a carefully sustained mythology which protects the interests of both politicians and administrators by keeping many potentially troublesome issues out of the public arena, effectively depoliticising them by defining them as matters of administrative rather than political concern. This process suits administrators and politicians alike for it depoliticises many issues which might otherwise prove distracting for politicians and it allows administrators to deal with such issues on a routine basis, thus giving them greater control over their administration and its relationship with the public. As Wilenski puts it:

> It has, however, served the purposes of both administrators and politicians . . . to maintain the myth of the separation of politics and administration (and thus, incidentally, obscure the purposes of administrative reform). The myth allows politicians to concentrate on electoral politics and other aspects of their roles. It allows administrators to engage in politics and in policy-making without being held accountable politically for the outcomes of their actions.
>
> (Wilenski 1979, p. 349)

This mythology also helps to sustain the legitimacy of politics and administration and paper over the significant tensions which arise from the opposition of the principles of democratic government and administrative organisation. This opposition is represented in the dichotomies referred to above and is usually addressed through the idea of 'balance' between political and administrative forces. Weber, in his discussions of the relationship between politics and administration in Germany following the First World War, was most concerned that the 'overtowering' impact of bureaucracies was balanced by the development of a parliamentary process which encouraged the emergence of essentially charismatic leaders capable of instructing the administrative apparatus of the state. However, it seems clear in retrospect that the history of public administration in the twentieth century is very much the history of the development of the 'overtowering bureaucracy' that Weber both admired and feared.

The development of administrative technique was initially concentrated in the field of industry where it was particularly suited to the structures of control demanded by the development of industrial capitalism (see Braverman 1974). However, while the development of 'administrative science' as it was to become known, was more quickly embraced by business than by government the twin principles it promised, those of efficiency and control, together with its claim to be the epitome of rational organisation, made it inevitable that similar principles would be applied to public administration. Indeed the claims of bureaucracy to rationality, efficiency and control proved irresistible. What was good for business was, it was claimed, good for government. Woodrow Wilson, one of the earliest advocates of a public administration based upon such principles, claimed in 1887 that 'the field of administration is a field of business' (Wilson 1953, p. 71).

The history of public administration in the twentieth century is, therefore, very much the history of the application and development of administrative science to the work of government. Indeed, government is more and more identified with the state bureaucracies that investigate, shape and direct so much of public and private life. There are grounds, therefore, for believing that the balance between politics and administration that Weber sought through a revitalised political system has yet to be achieved. What Weber feared, the domination of politics by administration, seems, in the modern world, much more likely.

The failure of modern societies to develop political institutions that are as substantial as contemporary administrative agencies is a major factor in the crisis of the state. It is a failure that lies at the heart of the crisis in public administration. It is a failure that lies at the heart of the crisis in education. This monograph is an attempt to understand why this should be so and to outline some of the attempts being made to rectify our understanding and practice of public administration, especially as it relates to education.

The separation of politics and administration

The need of the state for an administrative apparatus is directly derived from the fundamental characteristic of every political association: that is upon the use of force. According to Weber in 1919:

> 'Every state is founded on force', said Trotsky at Brest-Litovsk. That is indeed right. If no social institutions existed which knew the use of violence, then the concept of 'state' would be eliminated . . . Of course force is certainly

> not the normal or the only means of the state – nobody says that – but force is a means specific to the state . . . a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of force* within a given territory.
>
> (Gerth and Mills 1970, p. 78)

In the modern state, suggests Weber, force is exercised by politically dominant powers through two major means.

> Organized domination, which calls for continuous administration, requires that human conduct be conditioned to obedience towards those masters who claim to be the bearers of legitimate power. On the other hand, by virtue of this obedience, organized domination requires the control of those material goods which in a given case are necessary for the use of physical violence . . . The administrative staff, which externally represents the organization of political domination, is, of course, like any other organization, bound by obedience to the power-holder and not alone by the concept of legitimacy.
>
> (Gerth & Mills 1970, p. 80)

The state requires, according to Weber, a system of continuous administration in order to maintain its organised domination of a particular territory. Two main tasks preoccupy this administration. Firstly the development of systematic procedures through which 'human conduct (can) be conditioned in obedience'. Secondly, the development of systematic means of physical violence. If the first is sufficiently effective, the second will seldom be called into use. It is noteworthy that this system of administration is required to be neutral, or in Weber's words have a strong sense of integrity, in relation to the directions of the power holders. That is, the administration must be both able and willing to serve whatever masters are elected or achieve power and be independent of the struggles for power that are the preoccupation of would-be power holders. As the state becomes more complex the system of continuous administration increases and stands over and against party political struggles which Weber suggests '. . . are struggles for the patronage of office, as well as struggles for objective goals' (Gerth and Mills 1970, p. 87). Indeed

> the development of modern officialdom into a highly qualified, professional labor force, specialized in expertness through long years of preparatory training, stands opposed to all these [party political] arrangements. Modern bureaucracy in the interest of integrity has developed a high sense of status honor . . . And without such integrity, even the purely technical functions of the state apparatus would be endangered.
>
> (Gerth & Mills 1970, pp. 87–8)

For Weber the career of the bureaucrat stands in sharp contrast to the dispensability of politicians.

> The development of politics into an organization which demanded training in the struggle for power, and in the methods of this struggle as developed by modern party policies, determined the separation of public functionaries into two categories, which, however, are by no means rigidly but nevertheless distinctly separated. These categories are 'administrative' officials on the one hand, and 'political' officials on the other. The 'political' officials, in the genuine sense of the word, can regularly and externally be recognised by the fact that they can be transferred any time at will, that they can be dismissed, or at least temporarily withdrawn.
>
> (Gerth & Mills 1970, p. 90)

The role of the politician is, according to Weber, the passionate pursuit of power; not always by the best of means. Indeed Weber in his discussion of 'Politics as a vocation' makes much of the ethical dilemmas involved in pursuing worthy ends through unworthy means and of the 'irrationality' involved in the constant conflict of beliefs in the political arena. Weber's discussion of the difficulties of these value conflicts and their political resolution is largely a descriptive, even taxonomic account of various historical situations. While his accounts are both learned and interesting he fails to provide an account of political action which is anywhere near as definitive as his account of administrative action. While Weber discusses the various ways by which politicians assert their power and legitimacy he regards the political as an essentially irrational, emotional pursuit which he contrasts vividly with the rationality, impartiality and integrity of administration. For instance:

> According to his proper vocation, the genuine official . . . will not engage in politics. Rather, he should engage in impartial 'administration' . . . To take a stand, to be passionate . . . is the politician's element, and above all the element of the political *leader*. His conduct is subject to quite a different, indeed, exactly the opposite, principle of responsibility from that of the civil servant. The honor of the civil servant is vested in his ability to execute conscientiously the order of the superior authorities, exactly as if the order agreed with his own conviction. This holds even if the order appears wrong to him and if, despite the civil servant's remonstrances, the authority insists on the order . . . The honor of the political leader, of the leading statesman, however, lies precisely in an exclusive *personal* responsibility for what he does, a responsibility he cannot and must not reject or transfer.
>
> (Gerth & Mills 1970, p. 95)

For Weber then, there was a sharp contrast between the nature of politics and the nature of administration. Politics was the province of power seekers who pursued not only 'objective goals' but also the 'patronage of office'. Even the 'objective goals' were seen by Weber as being chosen on an essentially irrational basis 'because the various value spheres of the world stand in irreconcilable conflict with each other' (Gerth & Mills 1970, p. 147). Ultimately in the world of politics '*Weltanschauungen* clash, world views among which in the end one has to make a choice' (Gerth & Mills 1970, p. 117). Ultimately the determination of which world view is to prevail is not, in the world of politics, a matter of rationality but of power for 'the decisive means for politics is violence' (Gerth & Mills 1970, p. 121). On the other hand administration in its bureaucratic form is regarded as a significant shift towards the application of rationality to the organisation of social life. Indeed Weber in 1922 went as far as to claim that as a result of its technical superiority 'the march of bureaucracy has destroyed structures of domination which had no rational character . . . ' (Gerth & Mills 1970, p. 244). In its employment of rational legal structures of rules, in its appilication of the expertise of professionals to administrative problems, in its hierarchy of office and its impartiality of examiniation and treatment of cases, the bureaucracy epitomised for Weber the notion of rationality.

What emerges from Weber's analysis, as MacIntyre (1981) points out, is a sociological consequence of the philosophical inheritance of the Enlightenment and especially of its theories of empiricism on the one hand and emotivism on the other. As far as empiricism is concerned the attempt was one of 'laying bare the physiological and physical mechanisms which underlie action' in order to develop a notion of mechanical explanation: 'a conception of invariances specified by law-like generalisations' (MacIntyre 1981, p. 79). The difficulty with such a notion is its incompatibility with any explanation of action based upon moral imperatives. Thus as MacIntyre suggests

> . . . when Kant recognises that there is a deep incompatibility between any account of action which recognises the role of moral imperatives in governing action and any such mechanical type of explanation, he is compelled to the conclusion that actions obeying and embodying moral imperatives must be from the standpoint of science inexplicable and unintelligible.
>
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 79)

The result of the widespread acceptance of a mechanical, empiricist view of rationality and action is therefore the divorce of fact from value and the relegation of moral questions to a separate province of ethics dominated by the theory of emotivism. 'Emotivism', suggests MacIntyre in a useful definition, 'is the doctrine that all evaluative judgments and more specifically all moral judgments are *nothing but* expressions of preference, expressions of attitude or feeling, insofar as they are moral or evaluative in character' (1981, p. 11). As a result '. . . moral judgments, being expressions of attitude or feeling, are neither true nor false; and agreement in moral judgment is not to be secured by any rational method, for there are none' (1981, pp. 11–12).

It can readily be seen then that Weber's separation of politics from administration and his application of the dichotomies of fact and value, ends and means, charisma and rationality, policy and execution, democracy and management, power and authority, are almost inescapable outcomes of his acceptance of the canons of empiricism and emotionalism laid down during the Enlightenment. In this Weber was a creature of his times. As well as informing Weber's work these ideas have formed the basis of the practice and study of public administration from its inception.

The traditions of public administration

The academic study of public administration is an off-shoot of political science. While it established its independence as a field of study in the 1920s it had its roots in an earlier period. Perhaps the most important essay on public administration of this early period, one which foreshadowed many of the preoccupations of the field, was that published by Woodrow Wilson in 1887. In this paper Wilson sought to establish the importance of the study of public administration, to describe the main features of public administration as it had developed in Europe and to set out the major concerns that should guide the development of a 'science of administration' in the United States.

Beginning with a discussion of the historical enlargement of government functions and agencies during the nineteenth century Wilson argues that the debates of principle involved in political philosophy have to be joined by debates over administration

> The weightier debates of constitutional principle are even yet by no means concluded; but they are no longer of more immediate practical moment than questions of administration. It is getting to be harder to *run* a constitution than to frame one . . .
>
> (Wilson 1953, p. 67)

As greater demands are placed on government and as government responds by increasing the size and complexity of its intervention in the everyday affairs of business, commerce and private life, so the need for a science of administration becomes urgent.

> There is scarcely a single duty of government which was once simple which is not now complex; government once had but a few masters; it now has scores of masters. Majorities formerly only underwent government; they now conduct government. Where government once might follow the whims of a court, it must now follow the views of a nation.
>
> And those views are steadily widening to new conceptions of state duty; so that, at the same time that the functions of government are every day becoming more complex and difficult, they are also vastly multiplying in number . . . This is why there should be a science of administration which shall seek to straighten the paths of government, to make its business less unbusinesslike, to strengthen and purify its organisation, and to crown its duties with dutifulness. This is one reason why there is such a science.
>
> (Wilson 1953, p. 67)

The science Wilson looked for he found in the work of 'French and German professors', no doubt the same people who had informed Weber's work. Indeed the distinctions Wilson draws are very much the distinctions drawn by Weber. In particular, the empirical basis of the science of administration was seen as depending on the distinction between politics and administration. Thus

> . . . administration lies outside the proper sphere of *politics*. Administrative questions are not political questions. Although politics sets the tasks for administration, it should not be suffered to manipulate its offices.
>
> (Wilson 1953, p. 72)

Once this separation is achieved then the science of administration becomes possible. The purposes of such a science are clear.

> The object of administrative study is to rescue executive methods from the confusion and costliness of empirical experiment and set them upon foundations laid deep in stable principle.
>
> (Wilson 1953, p. 71)

That is, a science of administration must be developed which allows the detection and application of universal laws of organisation which can be applied in the name of efficient governance. Efficiency is a major purpose and administrative officials must be scrutinised for their adherence to the principles of public administration. However any excess of such scrutiny will impair the efficiency of the administration and must therefore be restrained. Democracy must not be allowed to get out of hand.

> Our peculiar American difficulty in organizing administration is not the danger of losing liberty, but the danger of not being able to separate its essentials from its accidents. Our success is made doubtful by that besetting error of ours, the error of trying to do too much by vote . . . The problem is to make public opinion efficient without suffering it to be meddlesome. Directly exercised, in the oversight of the daily details and in the choice of the daily means of government, public criticism is of course a clumsy nuisance, a rustic handling delicate machinery. But as superintending the greater forces of formative policy alike in politics and administration, public criticism is altogether safe and beneficent, altogether indispensable. Let administrative study find the best means for giving public criticism this control and for shutting it out from all other interference.
>
> (Wilson 1953, p. 74)

As Waldo (1953) suggests, the preoccupations of Wilson's paper foreshadowed the preoccupations of public administration as a field of study. The separation of the administrative from the political, of the laws of administration from the conflicts of politics, the appeal to efficiency and the recognition of the implicit conflict between democratic and administrative interests are all issues which recur time and time again in the study of public administration. Indeed Wilson's paper set out the fundamental features of the period of 'orthodoxy' in public administration which coincided with the reform movement in American public administration.

The roots of the 'orthodox' view of public administration lay in three major movements which developed through the early years of the twentieth century. The first of these movements was the Reform Movement which sought to replace the 'spoils' system of local government with an 'expert' system in which competence in managing public affairs became the major criterion for the holding of administrative office. This movement was directed in part against the dominance of local 'bosses' and against what was seen to be the corruption of local government. It was also prompted by the notion, embraced by Wilson among others, that government should become more 'businesslike'. Of major importance to this shift of public administration towards a businesslike approach was the rise of the second movement, that of scientific management.

While there were clearly difficulties in applying measures of productivity and effectiveness to government agencies the promises of scientific management to 'reduce cost and increase efficiency, and its aim of replacing ignorance and conflict with knowledge and harmony' (Waldo 1968, p. 147) were extremely appealing to the reformists. The third, though less important influence was the development of political science as a discipline, especially its notion that even the apparently irrational conflict of values in the political sphere could be reduced to the lawlike generalisations of an empirical science through observation and comparison.

In the mid 1920s textbooks began to appear which consolidated this orthodoxy and became the basis for the teaching of public administration in universities. The most influential texts were those of Leonard White (*Introduction to the Study of Public Administration*, 1926) and W. F. Willoughby (*Principles of Public Administration*, 1927). The core beliefs represented in these textbooks are summarised by Waldo.

> Government is divisible into two functions or processes, decision and execution. Making decisions is the realm of politics and policy making. It is the area in which the processes of democracy are relevant—expression of opinion, voting, organization of political parties, and so forth. Executing decisions, however, which is the realm of administration, presents other problems and needs other criteria. To the processes of administration the methods of science, proved so powerful elsewhere, are relevant. The criteria here are economy and efficiency; and economy can on close analysis be viewed as an aspect of efficiency. Through scientific research of the phenomena of administration we can derive principles of administration, which simultaneously summarize what we have learned and provide formulas for the efficient conduct of administration. By this process of analysis and division we can reconcile the values of democracy with the necessities of efficiency and science in the modern world.
>
> (Waldo 1968, p. 148).

During the 1940s, partly as a result of widespread experience of military or emergency organisations, it became clear that the orthodox models of public administration, indeed those of organisations in general, were lacking in certain key respects. The theoretical descriptions were belied by first hand experience.

Two rather different responses to this problem emerged. The first, represented in the work of Robert Dahl (1947) outlined three major difficulties. Firstly, it appeared that the separation of considerations of value from considerations of technique was, in practice, extremely hard to maintain. As a result of the 'frequent impossibility of excluding normative considerations from the problems of public administration' Dahl argued that 'the study of public administration must be founded on some clarification of ends' (1947, pp. 1–3). Secondly, Dahl argued that the development of mechanical models of administrative functioning omitted a crucial dimension in the management of public affairs: that of psychological man. As administrative structures were populated by, operated by and served human beings it seemed to Dahl an 'inescapable fact that a science of public administration must be a study of certain aspects of human behavior' (1947, p. 4). Thirdly, the narrowness of public administration as previously conceived was argued to be a major limiting factor in the development of a truly scientific perspective. Thus

> The study of public administration inevitably must become a much more broadly based discipline, resting not on a narrowly defined knowledge of techniques and processes, but rather extending to the varying historical, sociological, economic and other conditioning factors . . .
>
> (Dahl 1947, p. 11).

The second major response to the traditional orthodoxy was that of Herbert Simon. Simon was the first theorist to consciously embrace the principles of behaviouralism and apply them to the study of organisations. Simon was particularly critical of the previous tradition of public administration for its inadequate conception and utilisation of the scientific method. His objective was to establish a science of administration based upon the close empirical analysis of decision making. While arguing the incommensurability of fact and value in the positivist tradition, Simon acknowledged that 'in practice, the separation between the ethical and the factual elements in judgment can usually be carried only a short distance' (Simon 1976, p. 52). As a result he argued that *'the central concern of administrative theory is with the boundary between the rational and the nonrational aspects of human social behavior'* (1976, p.xxviii). In order to resolve the dilemma presented by the 'irrational' nature of value preferences, Simon raised a particular value to a position of dominance in administration: that of *efficiency*.

> A valid approach to the study of administration requires that *all* the relevant diagnostic criteria be identified; that each administrative situation be analyzed in terms of the entire set of criteria . . . when they are, as they usually will be, mutually incompatible . . .
>
> (Simon 1976, p. 36)

For Simon this meant that

> in the design of administrative organisations, as in their operation, over-all efficiency must be the guiding criterion.
>
> (Simon 1976, p. 36).

Efficiency was to be determined, according to Simon, through the construction of 'means-ends chains' of rational decision making (1976, pp. 61ff). The difficulty is, however, that if the distinction between fact and value and the 'irrationality' of choices between values are accepted as major premises then no matter how much empirical (even behavioural) research is conducted choices cannot rationally be made as a result. Even the decision to place efficiency as the prime value in administration cannot be argued for rationally or substantiated empirically.

Simon's work, despite its major flaws, had a great deal of impact on the study of administration though probably more in the world of business than in the world of public administration to which it was originally addressed.

During the 1950s and 1960s the field of public administration was beset by uncertainty. In 1968 Waldo, following a survey of the field, concluded that

> since the critical analyses of the late 1940s, Public Administration as a discipline has lacked the self-confidence and coherence of the interwar period. Various approaches or emphases have competed, but none has succeeded in winning the general acceptance of scholars identified with the discipline. No new synthesis has been achieved; no new orthodoxy has replaced the old. In general, Public Administration has grown tremendously in the sense of accepting data, concepts, and perspectives from many sources, chiefly the various social sciences; but it has discarded little, and no organizing framework into which everything will fit has been achieved—or, if achieved, has not been recognized and accepted as such.
>
> (Waldo 1968, p. 149)

Nonetheless, as Frederickson (1980a) points out, the period of the 1950s and 1960s did contribute two other major models of social science which had a significant impact on public administration. The first of these was the 'institutional' model of organization and the second was that of 'human relations'.

The institutional model was the work of a group of scholars who were 'concerned less with how to design efficient, effective or productive organizations than with how to analyze and understand existing bureaucracies' (Frederickson 1980a, p. 39). Mosher's (1968) analysis of professionals in public bureaucracies; Etzioni's (1961) comparative analysis of complex organisations and Thompson's (1967) synthesis of organisational literature are pointed to as exemplars of this tradition. Lindbloom's (1965) defence of this tradition (as described by Frederickson 1980a) is seen as pivotal, arguing as it does that 'rationality [in organisations] is not only unlikely, but undesirable', that 'bureaucracies make decisions in incremental ways, that these decisions are bargains and compromises . . . and that they move government gradually toward vague objectives' (Frederickson 1980a, p. 40). Lindbloom argues that this situation is the only possible one for the operation of bureaucracies in uncertain circumstances.

> Only through incremental decision making can the skills of the bureaucracy be integrated with the policy preferences and political biases of elected officials. Therefore, implementation of a rational model is both empirically naive and morally indefensible. It makes of decision theorists an elite who substitute their findings for the prejudices and preferences of elected representatives.
>
> (Frederickson 1980a, p. 40)

Critics of this point of view suggest that it is really nothing more than an elaborate apology for the 'muddling through' of public bureaucracies disguised as empirical research.

The institutional movement was, however, quite serious in its attempt to provide an empirical description of institutional processes. That it was weakest at the point where it shifted from description to prescription should not surprise us as the empiricist acceptance of the mutual distinctiveness of fact and value and the characterisation of value choices as somehow 'irrational' has been the major stumbling block of research and theory lying within the positivist tradition.

A similar problem bedevilled the 'human relations' movement. While this movement took seriously Dahl's suggestion that administrative science must articulate an adequate theory of psychological behaviour in organisations, it too was committed to an empiricist account of behaviour. Partly a reaction to the classical bureaucratic and mechanical models of administration encouraged by the apologists of scientific management, the human relations movement focused on issues such as morale, job satisfaction, leadership, conflict and cooperation, formal and informal organisation and the influence of the informal group on production and personal relations. Two texts are particularly important in the consolidation of this movement: Katz and Kahn's *The Social Psychology of Organizations* (1966) and Likert's *The Human Organization: Its Management and Value* (1967).

One of the outcomes of the human relations movement was the growth of organisational development techniques such as group dynamics, sensitivity training and associated training models. Proponents of the human relations movement claim that the values underlying the movement are antithetical to those of the preceding 'scientific management' model in that they emphasise worker and client participation, a reduction in status differentiation and competition and an increase in openness, honesty, self-actualisation and worker satisfaction (see Frederickson 1980a, p. 40). Other evaluations such as that of Carey (1967) suggest, however, that the human relations movement was little more than an attempt to colonise the realm of personal relations in order to further the aims of management, i.e., to increase production, extend control, minimise economic demands and reduce union power (see also Bates 1983).

By the end of the 1960s public administration had several alternative models to choose from and no effective means of discriminating between them on the basis of either empirical validity, theoretical elegance, predictive power or ethical justification. Clearly such a state of affairs could not be allowed to continue. The need was for a new public administration.

The shaking of the foundations

Part of the problem for public administration was that the assumptions of the field had been overtaken by the empirical description of events. In particular the separation of politics from administration and of fact from value were coming to be seen as more in the nature of academic illusions rather than as descriptions of the real world. In addition the real world seemed to be changing. In their review of the history of public administration's conceptions of the relations between *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*, Aberbach, Putnam & Rockman (1981) suggest that there are four major images to be abstracted from the literature. The first is the simplest.

> The earliest theory about the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats was in many ways the simplest: politicians make policy; civil servants administer. Politicians make decisions; bureaucrats merely implement them.
> (Aberbach, Putnam & Rockman 1981, p. 4)

In support of this position Weber, Wilson, Goodnow and Gulick are invoked although it is noted that Weber in particular was not unaware of the difficulty facing politicians in maintaining their control of the bureaucracy. Other commentators such as Rourke have enlarged this issue into the claim that

> . . . a variety of circumstances in modern life, including especially the growing weight of expert knowledge in policy formation, continue to push bureaucracy toward a position of pre-eminence in the governing process . . . this bureaucratic power rests partly on the extraordinary capacities of public agencies as sources of expertise, and partly on the fact that administrative agencies have become major centers for the mobilization of political energy and support. As a result, bureaucratic politics rather than party politics has become the dominant theater of decision in the modern state.
> (Rourke quoted in Frederickson 1980a, pp. 34–5)

This is a point made also by Rosenbloom in his assertion that '. . . the constitutional separation of powers [in the United States constitution] . . . has tended to collapse into the administrative branch as a consequence of the rise of the contemporary administrative state' (Rosenbloom 1983, p. 219).

The second image outlined by Aberbach and his colleagues assumes that rather than a complete separation of function, bureaucrats and politicians make equal but different contributions to policy making and administration.

> Civil servants bring facts and knowledge; politicians, interests and values. Civil servants bring neutral expertise . . . while politicians bring political

> sensitivity . . . Civil servants thus emphasize the technical efficacy of policy, while politicians emphasize its responsiveness to relevant constituencies.
> (Aberbach, Putnam & Rockman 1981, p. 6)

This image is clearly associated with the work of Herbert Simon and his colleagues. Morstein Marx makes a similar point in his discussion of the personalities and predilections of politicians and administrators.

> . . . administrative rationality often has little appeal to the political mind, whether in the executive branch or in the legislative body. The political decision-maker, bent upon his aims, is often impatient with dispassionate reasoning, except in small doses. He does not like to face the dreadful array of pertinent facts, especially when he is cast in the role of the special pleader . . . Exceptional political maturity is required for public opinion and party leaders to welcome the role of the bureaucracy in putting proposed policy to the acid test of cause-and-effect relationships.
> (Marx quoted in Aberbach, Putnam & Rockman 1981, p. 7)

In the third image both politicians and bureaucrats are involved in policy formation and decision making.

> The real distinction between them is this: whereas politicians articulate broad, diffuse interests of unorganized individuals, bureaucrats mediate narrow, focused interests of organized clienteles. In this interpretation of the division of labor, politicians are passionate, partisan, idealistic, even ideological; bureaucrats are, by contrast, prudent, centrist, practical, pragmatic. Politicians seek publicity, raise innovative issues, and are energising to the policy system, whereas bureaucrats prefer the back room, manage incremental adjustments, and provide policy equilibrium . . .
> (Aberbach, Putnam & Rockman 1981, p. 9)

These three models indicate a tendency towards convergence of the roles of bureaucrat and politician, some claim to the point where they are relatively difficult to distinguish. This is especially the case if Rourke's assertion is taken seriously and that it is accepted that 'bureaucratic politics rather than party politics has become the dominant theater of decision in the modern state' (quoted in Frederickson 1980a, pp. 34–5). As Aberbach, Putnam & Rockman put it:

> . . . our first three images suggest a progressively greater degree of overlap between the roles of bureaucrat and politician . . . [and] the intellectual origins of the three conceptions are progressively more recent . . . Assuming a rough, if lagged, correspondence between government realities and scholarly interpretations, this progression is at least consistent with the notion that in behavioral terms the two roles have been converging—perhaps reflecting, as some have argued, a 'politicization' of the bureaucracy and a 'bureaucratization' of politics. Carrying this notion to its logical conclusion, Image IV suggests speculatively that the last quarter of this century is witnessing the virtual disappearance of the Weberian distinction between the roles of politician and bureaucrat . . .
> (Aberbach, Putnam & Rockman 1981, p. 16)

Whether or not the final decades of the twentieth century will witness the appearance of the 'pure hybrid' of the political administrator is still a matter for speculation. What does seem clear is that in practice as well as in theory the distinction between politician and administrator, at least in the manner conceived by Weber and Wilson, is subject to considerable modification.

If the fundamental distinction between the responsibilities of politician and administrator is becoming blurred, what of the separation of fact and value? As was apparent from our earlier discussion of Weber there is something inherently odd about a definition of administrators and bureaucrats which relates the former to a preoccupation with values and the latter to a preoccupation with facts. This is especially the case where values are argued to be unconnected to facts and subject only to irrational and unjustifiable preferences, disputes between which can only be settled through the exercise of violence. Similarly, there is something equally odd about the notion of an administration which is so preoccupied with facts as to become morally indifferent to the ends to be served by and the consequences contingent on its activities. If the best defence of public administration can only be founded on a conception of politicians as irrational and administrators as amoral we should hardly be surprised if the public come to view such administration with scepticism and mistrust.

It was the realisation of the ethical consequences of such a conception of administration that led to a great deal of disaffection among younger scholars of public administration in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the United States this disaffection came to a head at the 1967 conference on public administration sponsored by the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences. In particular:

> There was sharp criticism of the conference, particularly by younger theorists, practitioners and students. The numerous criticisms . . . included (1) avoiding the major issues of the time: urban race riots, poverty, the war in Vietnam, the ethical responsibilities of public officials; (2) a failure to be bold in suggesting positive new concepts or theories; (3) a preoccupation with ideas, concepts, and theories developed prior to 1960; (4) an insufficient interest in social and organizational change; (5) too much trust in expertise and organizational capabilities and too little questioning of bureaucratic ways; (6) not enough concern for limits on growth, organizational cutback, and decline; (7) not enough concern for citizens' demands and needs and the issues of responsiveness except by elected officials; (8) an over-optimistic view of what government and administration either can or should accomplish.
>
> (Frederickson 1980b, p.xi)

Underlying this onslaught of criticism was a clear impatience with the value neutrality of classical public administration and its tendency to distance itself from complex and controversial issues while focusing on narrow empiricist studies of administrative processes. The result was a further conference attended only by professors under the age of thirty-five. This became known as the Minnowbrook conference. Its themes were identified by Frank Marini as relevance; post-positivism; adaptation to a turbulent environment; new forms of organization and client-focused organizations (Marini 1971). Fundamental to all of these concerns was a preoccupation with bringing values back in to a central position in public administration, not only as a subject for study but as imperative considerations in the formulation of public policy.

While the three major publications to emerge from the Minnowbrook conference are very different in character and position, they share this concern with bringing values back in. The 'New Public Administration' which emerged from this conference was an attempt to revitalise public administration in theory and in practice by incorporating a new set of concerns.

New directions in public administration

The New Public Administration that developed from the Minnowbrook conference is outlined in three major collections of essays edited by Marini (1971), Waldo (1971) and Frederickson (1973). The major thrust of these collections is that firstly, the traditional notion that public administrators are or should be value neutral is empirically inaccurate and morally indefensible. Secondly, if values are to have a central place in the study and practice of public administration the problem of ordering conflicting values must be faced rather than being automatically discounted as the province of an irrational politics. Thirdly, in the practice of public administration the overriding value of 'efficiency' demanded by Simon must be joined by other values such as responsiveness, equity, participation, choice and accountability. It was not, however, the objective of the Minnowbrook conference to overturn the traditional values of public administration but to supplement and extend the study and practice of public administration to embrace the concerns of the wider society. In his assessment of the New Public Administration Frederickson makes this clear.

> The traditional values of public administration – economy, efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness to elected officials, responsibility – have served us well. But the experiences of the past decade indicate that other values (not necessarily new ones) are important to any public service ethic . . . This is not a negation of the importance of a general public service productivity or of the continuing search for efficiencies and economies in government. It is simply to suggest that the most productive governments, the most efficient governments, and the most economizing governments can still be perpetuating poverty, inequality of opportunity, and injustice. Both the classic bureaucratic model and the neobureaucratic model offer little in the way of offsetting those tendencies. Therefore, modern public administration will search both theoretically and normatively for what Vincent Ostrom calls 'democratic administration'.
>
> (Frederickson 1980b, p. 47)

Concerns with the possibility of a democratic administration have also been voiced in the United Kingdom. Dunleavy (1982) in a review of new themes in public administration suggests that a radical approach to public administration has grown up outside the mainstream of the field which offers much in terms of new insights.

The first characteristic of the radical alternative is that it is not prepared to accept the face value accounts of administrative processes provided by administrators, regarding such accounts as partly self-serving, partly composed of sustaining mythology (see Thompson 1983) and largely ignorant of the wider 'systems of transformation' to which public administration is regularly subject. The radical view suggests that 'academic analysis must seek to penetrate behind administrative actors' subjective views of the processes within which they are enmeshed' (Dunleavy 1982, p. 217), in order to explicate the essential transformative structures of the administrative system which they inhabit and which constrains and induces them to behave in certain ways .

The second characteristic of radical approaches is that they challenge the notion of administrative neutrality with regard to social conflicts. Changes in public administration are seen to be intimately related to broader social conflicts such as those between classes.

> . . . radical approaches make a sustained attempt to understand changes in public administration in terms of their integral connections with broad social conflicts, especially those between social or occupational classes or major functional groups (such as business and labour). They thus deny both that administrative changes and arrangements are normally neutral as between social groups, and that administrative change responds largely to an internal organizational logic.
>
> (Dunleavy 1982, p. 217)

Rather, changes in public administration are seen as the outcome of conflicts between social groups and, frequently, as interventions in such conflicts on behalf of certain parties.

Thirdly, the traditional doctrine of evolutionary changes in organisational and administrative life is challenged by the notion of crisis. This view is in contrast to that of gradualistic models and suggests that firstly, 'crises are periods of concentrated change, change which is to a great extent forced on actors whether they wish it or not . . . ' and secondly that 'because conflict is endemic, most crisis management takes the form of displacing tensions and problems from one part of the political and administrative system to another . . . ' (Dunleavy 1982, p. 218). This does not mean, as is sometimes supposed, that crises lead inevitably to the failure and collapse of existing institutions. Rather, they are more likely to lead to a transcendence of the crisis and the establishment of new patterns of behaviour. Whether collapse or transcendence occurs is, of course, an empirical matter dependent on the particular forces at work in any specific situation.

Fourth, Dunleavy argues, the radical approach reintroduces the notion of functional explanation, that is, rather than concentrating on cause and effect relationships such as the means-end chains suggested by Simon, the radical view attempts to establish the function of particular administrative actions in the wider social and political context.

Fifth, the radical approach embraces the notion of popular participation as its major political agenda. In this respect, the radical approach is not simply an extension of J. S. Mills' argument (see Dunleavy 1982, p. 219) regarding political representation but rather a response to the impenetrability of technocratic administrative structures and an attempt to reassert human agency.

> Technocratic government emerges on this view not just as objectionable in terms of the theory of representative government, but as a form of social arrangements which negates fundamentally human qualities and inevitably induces a loss of common purposes or reference points in society.
>
> (Dunleavy 1982, pp. 219–20)

The radical approach to public administration is not formulated specifically as a critique of traditional views of public administration but rather is incidental to a larger critique of social organisation. This has made it particularly difficult to summarise, as an understanding of the position is contingent on the understanding of other aspects of social organisation—what the Marxists label as the concept of 'totality'. However, the radical approach can be seen to provide insights in three main areas—the organisation of government in liberal democracies, finance and budgeting, and the professionalisation of government.

The radical approach to government is to analyse it as part of the state as a whole. It sees the state as an arena of struggle between interests and agencies which is constantly shaped and reshaped by internal and external debates. In this respect

> the essential radical argument about government organization is that it forms a structure which systematically promotes some kinds of solutions to social problems over others, and hence also promotes some kinds of social interests over others. Given that private market processes of economic development underpin state finances and critically determine the level of income and employment in liberal democracies, government organization reflects the primacy of functions which promote such development and protect business interests.
>
> (Dunleavy 1982, p. 220)

The second area in which the radical approach provides a fresh perspective on public administration is the area of budgeting. Rather than adopt the conventional 'accounting' approach to budgeting, the radicals attempt to measure the relative distribution and redistribution of resources by government and use these measures as indices of governmental support for particular classes and groups. This approach has been labelled 'fiscal sociology' by O'Connor (1973). As Dunleavy suggests:

> Fiscal sociology breaks more or less completely with the approach practised in conventional public finance of analyzing budgetary decision-making in isolation from the concrete groups and interests promoting expenditures or deriving benefits from particular budgetary decisions. Instead these relationships are taken as central to any explanation, and the budget is treated as a summary measure of the balance of state policy as between social classes and groups.
>
> (Dunleavy 1982, pp. 221–2)

The third area in which radical public administration has developed a new perspective is that of professionalisation. Rather than adopt the conventional position of seeing the 'autonomy' of professionals as antithetical to the structures and operations of bureaucracy, the radicals are more likely to emphasise the mutual dependence of bureaucracy and professional and treat protestations of autonomy as a convenient, self-serving fiction (see Bates 1980), rather than accept professional claims at face value.

> The radical approach adopts a fundamentally critical attitude towards professional ideologies' altruistic or 'public interest' orientation, preferring to assess such claims by looking at the concrete impacts of professional control.
>
> (Dunleavy 1982, p. 223)

The professionalisation of welfare services is one area of such analysis and critique, leading, in one instance to Illich's conception of the logic of the professions as 'disabling'. This argument

> . . . essentially claims that in many areas of professional control over policy making, such as doctors' ability to define the content of medical practice, or teachers' control over learning, the provision of pre-packaged services in a form which can be 'sold' to governments is often self-defeating. The professions will almost always reduce people's autonomous capabilities for health care or learning faster than they replace these capabilities with their own commodified solutions . . . for the radical approach, chronic features of state service provision which remain largely unexplained in conventional approaches . . . emerge as anomalies inherent in a professionalized form of administration.
>
> (Dunleavy 1982, p. 223)

It would seem, then, that both the New Public Administration and the radical approach to public administration are attempting to grapple with what are seen as inadequacies with the traditional approach. However, while the New Public Administration can be seen as an extension and elaboration of the traditions of public administration, the radical approach marks a singular departure. In the former case the emphasis can be seen to have shifted and certain additional values to have been incorporated into the field. Indeed the fundamental emphasis of the New Public Administration is the close relationship between values and public policy. In the latter case a whole new structure of analysis is provided which is concerned with the relation of public administration to the 'totality' of social life, which takes as its starting point for analysis conflicts between classes and groups within this totality and which is critical of the ideological pretensions of such groups and classes. This perspective has been applied in a provisional fashion to significant aspects of public administration such as government organisation, budgeting and professionalisation.

Fact, value, effectiveness and expertise: The myth of management

While the New Public Administration and the radical approach shift the emphasis of the field or recontextualise it within wider critical social analysis, neither resolves the problems inherent in the separation of fact from value which traditionally bedevils the field. Neither do these perspectives resolve the difficulties posed, on the one hand by the association of neutral expertise based upon knowledge of facts, of causes and effects with administration; and on the other hand by the association of values with conflict between irrational preferences which is resolvable only through the violence of politics. It seems as though the spectre of behaviouralism still haunts public administration even in its most modern forms.

Indeed this seems to be the case. While Weber, Simon and some of the more perceptive of the traditional theorists made reference to the necessity of relating facts to values in administration they also insisted on the impossibility of doing so *rationally*. As a result of their commitment to rationality it was all but inevitable that they should therefore lean towards the study and creation of the means-ends chains of bounded rationality as the basis for a formal theory of administration. But, as Wilson points out, their initial instincts were surely correct.

> Clearly, any adequate comprehension of politics must see the rational element in the *interrelation* of personal and societal values, means and ends, facts and values, the administrative and the political, preparatory to and following upon choice and decision.
>
> (Wilson 1985, p. 127)

The problem however is that classical administration theorists have started from the wrong set of premises.

> Instead, writers like Weber and Lasswell have tended to start from a highly formal model which: (1) *presupposes* the above dichotomies; (2) *invents* a notion of technical, instrumental and calculating behaviour which is unrealistic because isolated from self-interest, ends, values and the political.
>
> (Wilson 1985, p. 127)

The result is not only to separate facts from values and displace the consideration of values to another place, but also to construct a formal theory of administration which prevents the contemplation of *practical* action. As Wilson suggests the behaviouralist thinking that underlies such a conception of theory separates theory from practice and denies the theory-laden nature of practice.

> Behaviouralist thinking reflects the influence of a conception of the practical . . . absent not only of an ethical dimension, however, but of an intellectual and theoretical one as well.
>
> (Wilson 1985, p. 130)

What is occurring here is the academic equivalent of the separation of conception from execution noted by Braverman as a key feature of the attempt of managers to gain control of the knowledge of workers (Braverman 1974). In administration this perspective is an encouragement to those being administered to offer up their ethical and intellectual convictions in deference to the 'legitimate' decision makers.

> . . . the ideal of value-neutrality so central to professional objectivity and detachment . . . served to justify both a *scientistic* and a *productive* and *interventionist* approach to knowledge and knowing. While the role of thought and theory was redefined, ethical concerns were effectively sidestepped by a discipline determined to tacitly legitimise the claim that such matters were, after all, the province of political, bureaucratic and corporate decision makers.
>
> (Wilson 1985, p. 131)

The claim of behaviouralism in politics and administration is apparent in the work of theorists such as Simon. That claim is based essentially on the claim to expertise in the organisation of means-ends chains in hierarchies which are the most efficient and effective means of executing decisions made in some place external to the administrative process.

> Behaviouralism claimed that it could offer a practical science of politics allegedly based on the model of activity in science and the professions. In a sense it did succeed in doing this, but only by acquiescing in a formulation of practice and the practical which denuded it of both its ethical and its contemplative dimensions.
>
> (Wilson 1985, p. 137)

What eventuated was a limited form of technological rationality concerned exclusively with matters of efficiency and effectiveness. This technological rationality, excluding as it did all ethical concerns and matters of practical judgment, resulted in a highly manipulative form of managerialism. As MacIntyre suggests:

> Managers themselves and most writers about management conceive of themselves as morally neutral characters whose skills enable them to devise the most efficient means of achieving whatever end is proposed. Whether a given manager is effective or not is on the dominant view a quite different question from that of the morality of the ends which his effectiveness serves or fails to serve. None the less there are strong grounds for rejecting the claim that effectiveness is a morally neutral value. For the whole concept of effectiveness is . . . inseparable from a mode of human existence in which the contrivance of means is in central part the manipulation of human beings into compliant patterns of behaviour; and it is by appeal to his own effectiveness in this respect that the manager claims authority within the manipulative mode.
>
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 71)

This observation is an elaboration of Weber's assertion noted above that 'organised domination . . . requires that human conduct be conditioned to obedience towards those masters who claim to be the bearers of legitimate power' (Gerth and Mills 1970, p. 80). What has emerged in the guise of managerialism is not only, therefore, a system of administration which separates fact from value, politics from administration, means from ends, and theory from practice, but one which also separates managers from managed in the pursuit of a system of organised domination: the 'manipulation of human beings into compliant patterns of behaviour'.

Yet, in public administration, no less than in other forms of administration, the criterion of effectiveness is the criterion continuously appealed to for justification of managerial behaviour. As this is so it seems reasonable to suggest, as MacIntyre does, that

> this effectiveness is a defining and definitive element of a way of life which competes for our allegiance with other alternative contemporary ways of life; [thus] . . . if we are to evaluate the claims of the bureaucratic, managerial mode to a place of authority in *our* lives, an assessment of the bureaucratic managerial claim to effectiveness will be an essential task.
>
> (MacIntyre 1981, pp. 71–2)

The basic difficulty in demonstrating effectiveness (or the lack of it) is the generality of the claim. In judging effectiveness, empirical accounts should be available which conform to agreed criteria. Yet it is just such accounts and criteria that are missing. Moreover because of the complexity of the interaction of multiple variables in complex organisations, clear-cut empirical demonstrations of effectiveness seem to be limited to short run events. Yet such short run events frequently do not display any unequivocal connection with long run events. This presents an apparently insoluble problem as how can short run events be said to demonstrate effectiveness if they bear no demonstrable relationship to long run success, or, more especially, if they appear to be connected to long term failure? Egon Bittner put the problem in this fashion:

> While Weber is quite clear . . . in stating that the sole justification of bureaucracy is its efficiency, he provides us with no clear-cut guide on how this standard of judgment is to be used. Indeed, the inventory of features of

> bureaucracy contains not one single item that is not arguable relative to its efficiency function. Long-range goals cannot be used definitely for calculating it because the impact of contingent factors multiplies with time and makes it increasingly difficult to assign a determinate value to the efficiency of a stably controlled segment of action. On the other hand, the use of short-term goals in judging efficiency may be in conflict with the ideal of economy itself. Not only do short-term goals change with time and compete with one another in indeterminate ways, but short-term results are of notoriously deceptive value because they can be easily manipulated to show whatever one wishes them to show.
>
> (Bittner quoted in MacIntyre 1981, p. 72)

Such arguments lead to the possibility that managerial claims to effectiveness might be very difficult to substantiate. Indeed, as MacIntyre suggests:

> It is the gap between the generalised notion of effectiveness and the actual behaviour that is open to managers which suggests that the social uses of the notion are other than they purport to be . . . what if effectiveness is part of a masquerade of social control rather than a reality? What if effectiveness were a quality widely imputed to managers and bureaucrats both by themselves and others, but in fact a quality which rarely exists apart from this imputation?
>
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 72)

There is indeed some evidence that suggests that the 'great man' myth associated so often with 'outstanding managers' is a fabrication designed to sustain faith in a form of behaviour which cannot demonstrate its effectiveness in any but the most general fashion. Moreover, as Teulings has argued in the case of a major international electronics company, such myths may well be ' . . . a stylistic solution to a methodological problem, and a reflection of the observer's ideology' (Teulings 1980, p. 152). In the case described by Teulings the company history is written in terms of:

> 1. the dynamism of 'great men', taking 'decisive' action;
> 2. the imperative force of successive technological development;
> 3. the necessary adaptation to universal processes of industrialization and modernization.
>
> (Teulings 1980, p. 151)

Each of these explanations for the company's 'success' is shown by Teulings to be misleading: more satisfactory explanations are provided derived from ' . . . an approach to industrial change which takes the structure and logic of formation of the industrial sec[illegible] a point of departure . . . ' (1980, p. 151). A similar analysis of public administration in Australia is provided by Thompson (1983). Several more are provided in the collection of papers edited by Fischer and Sirianni (1984). Further analyses are provided by Carey (1967) and Bates (1983) in relation to the effectiveness of the human relations movement. Each of these analyses displays the gap that exists between various claims to managerial effectiveness and various alternative explanations that are seldom less convincing.

Nonetheless managers lay claim to the ability to engineer efficiency and effectiveness in the organisations that they manage. What are we to make of such claims? MacIntyre, following a discussion of the sources of predictability and unpredictability in social life and an analysis of contemporary empirical studies, reaches the following conclusion:

> The experts' claim to status and reward is fatally undermined when we recognise that he possesses no sound stock of law-like generalisations and when we realise how weak the predictive power available to him is. The concept of managerial effectiveness is after all one more contemporary moral fiction and perhaps the most important of them all. The dominance of the manipulative mode in our culture is not and cannot be accompanied by very much actual success in manipulation.
>
> (MacIntyre 1981, p. 101)

Nonetheless what might be called the logic of manipulation does serve to produce some quite unfortunate effects as is evident from Pusey's (1976) analysis of the *Dynamics of Bureaucracy*.

The dynamics of bureaucracy

Dynamics of Bureaucracy is a case study of an educational organisation, one which is fairly typical not only of educational but also of other state bureaucracies. According to Pusey's analysis the bureaucracy operates through 'the three dimensions of organisation'. These are, the *formal* structure, which is concerned with the distribution of authority and control; the *technology*, which includes not only the physical apparatus of the organisation but more especially the logic or conceptual schema according to which the activities of the organisation are arranged and justified; and the *social* dimension which relates to the interaction of personalities and the sense of identity which is created through such interaction. The proper analysis of organisations depends upon the study of the balances and imbalances, the harmonies and tensions between these three dimensions.

> . . . an organisation is a *system*, which means that it cannot be understood as a formal structure *per se*; or as a rationally contrived goal-directed arrangement of functions, operations, and roles; or even as a web of social relationships. It is not the three component dimensions as such that are important, but rather the way in which they affect each other. The 'system' is then the *dynamic interrelationship* of these three dimensions . . . The problems of bureaucratic organisation are thus to be understood in 'systemic' terms as unresolved tensions, conflicts and imbalances between the dimensions. Moreover, the operation and administration of the system and its problems – the imbalances and tensions in the interrelationship of the dimensions – must be considered in the light of the organisation's relationship to its environment and, more especially, in relation to the general nature of its task.
>
> (Pusey 1976, p. 44)

Using this basic model for his analysis, Pusey then goes on to provide a detailed explanation of the relationships between these three dimensions in an Australian state education department – that of Tasmania in the early 1970s. Beginning with an analysis of teacher–pupil relationships in the secondary school classroom, Pusey suggests that the tension between the adolescent student's social and emotional dependence and the authority and power of the teacher is resolved by students through 'the withdrawal game'. In this game the students attempt to protect their dependence and vulnerability firstly by putting a social and emotional distance between themselves and the teachers and secondly by insisting that the teachers specify in great detail the nature of the performance expected from the students. Each of these components of the withdrawal game serves to reduce uncertainty and vulnerability for students and 'bind the teacher in his own rules'. This effectively eliminates the psycho-social dimension of classroom relations and turns them entirely towards the technical and formal dimensions.

> The withdrawal game is a very effective strategy. It enables the students to cope with what is for them a threatening situation. The cost, however, is very high indeed because the strategy leaves no room for any genuine sense of involvement. The student has to seal off the teacher and his wares from the inner compartments of his mind and so the school must remain for him a largely alien and impersonal structure. Nothing can be deeply internalised . . . The educational process has lost its social foundation and become a mechanical activity.
>
> (Pusey 1976, pp. 96–7)

As the teaching process depends for its success on more than simple mechanical activity, the withdrawal game is highly subversive for both student and teacher. Indeed, it provokes personal insecurities in both students and teachers. This means that teachers may well have to look elsewhere for emotional satisfaction, possibly towards their colleagues.

> . . . the teacher, for several reasons, is almost as dependent on his peers and on the principal as his students are dependent upon him. The withdrawal game has isolated him from his students and vice versa but, even if he were less estranged from them, he would still have to look to the staff and to their head for the satisfaction of many emotional needs.
>
> (Pusey 1976, p. 97)

The difficulty is that just as teachers' judgment of students leads to the defensive withdrawal game in the classroom, the authority of the principal and his subjective judgments of teachers lead to a similar breakdown of the psycho-social dimension of the organisation at this level too. This is especially the case where, as in the case outlined by Pusey, principals view their role in terms of authority, that is, exclusively in terms of the formal structure of the organisation. As a result

> because the model on which the principal operates (his *modus operandi*) adds to the insecurity of the teachers and to their dependence on the exercise of his authority, they will unconsciously begin to play the withdrawal game . . . The teachers are in fact hiding from their authority figure in much the same way as the students hide from them. They are pushing the principal out of the personal, psycho-social realm of the third dimension and into the first.
>
> Since there is virtually no genuine dialogue, the principal is quite unable to lead his staff; instead he has to go on 'running' them.
>
> (Pusey 1976, p. 99)

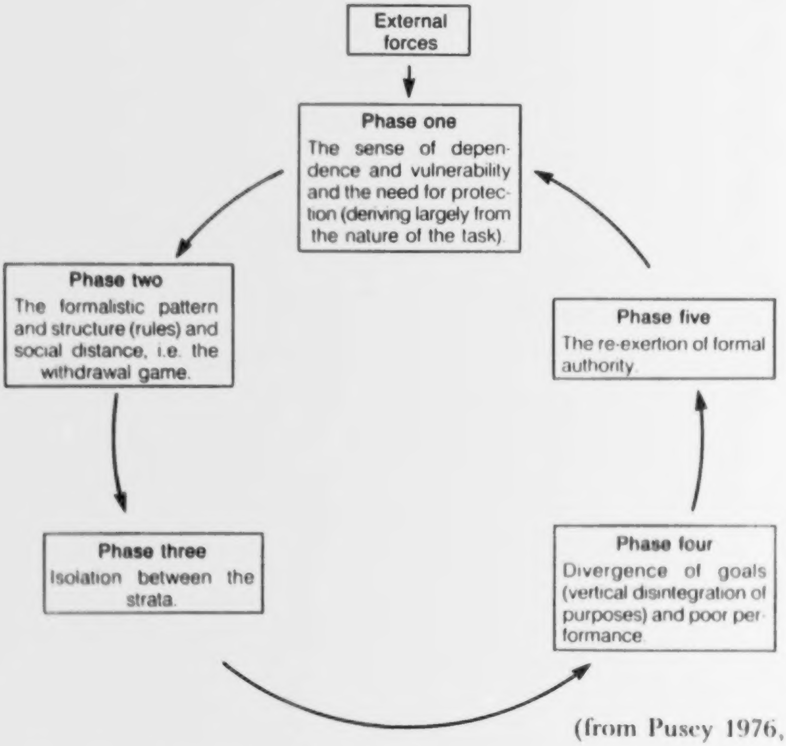
A similar relationship develops between principals and superintendents at the next level 'up' the system. Pusey describes the origins of the problem.

> The superintendents have come up through the ranks and have thus been shaped in the same mould as the principals. Since they have no special expertise or training, their role will have at best only a hollow legal legitimacy unless they can demonstrate that they are effectively able to influence the work of the school. They know they must try to 'loosen up' the schools and break the authoritarian tradition. They want to function more informally as advisers rather than as authority figures, but this is interpreted by the principal as a potential subversion of his authority . . . This puts the superintendent in a difficult situation. He is unable to call himself an adviser, because

> no one asks him for his advice. He cannot abdicate . . . and so he is driven to the point where he feels he has no option but to 'pull his rank' on the principal. He has to fall back on the first dimension and its machinery . . .
>
> (Pusey 1976, pp. 101–2)

The consequence of these dynamics is the creation of what Pusey (following Crozier 1964) calls the disabling pattern of the 'vicious circle'. This is represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The 'vicious circle'


External forces
Phase one
The sense of dependence and vulnerability and the need for protection (deriving largely from the nature of the task).
Phase two
The formalistic pattern and structure (rules) and social distance, i.e. the withdrawal game.
Phase three
Isolation between the strata.
Phase four
Divergence of goals (vertical disintegration of purposes) and poor performance.
Phase five
The re-exertion of formal authority.

(from Pusey 1976, p. 103).

The effect of this vicious circle is to shift the whole activity of the school, indeed the system as a whole, away from the psycho-social dimension on which the success of education depends, towards the technical and formal dimensions of the organisation. In doing so the system also effectively isolates itself from the local parent and citizen community of which it might, under somewhat different circumstances, hope to be a part.

> The isolation of the local parent and citizen community may do more to aggravate the system's problems than any other single factor. The parents and citizens do not tend to perceive the school as an extension of *their* local community. It would be fairly unnatural for them to refer to it as 'our school', instead it is perceived as a branch of a highly centralised, impersonal and remote state bureaucracy.
>
> (Pusey 1976, p. 108)

This is a phenomenon asserted by Connell et al. to be particularly the case with working-class schools in contrast with the relatively 'organic' nature of the relationship between the ruling class and its school (Connell et al. 1982).

This detailed case study of an educational organisation and its problems is argued by Pusey to be rather typical of the situation of many public, especially educational, bureaucracies which, through the disabling pattern of the vicious circle, turn away from the essentially psycho-social (and in that sense, public) dimensions of their responsibilities and move increasingly towards a formalisation and technicisation of their activities. According to Pusey modern bureaucracy is

> . . . faced with a growing dilemma arising from the fact that in practice, the quantity and forms of its structure are increasingly decided by external demands and considerations that are *extrinsic* to the inherent nature of its task. This is a general problem to which educational bureaucracies are particularly susceptible. As the goals of education are widened by general changes in society, the public invests more money in its schools, expects more from them, and adds to the weight of responsibilities that are thrust upon the system. This increases the pressure for accountability and therefore tends to reinforce the formal structure. This may further subvert the social basis of effective organisational action and thereby render the bureaucracy steadily more incapable of fulfilling its purposes.
>
> (Pusey 1976, p. 117)

A detailed substantiation of this pattern in American education is provided, among others, by Wise (1979).

Public administration and the crisis of the state

The pattern detected by Pusey can be fitted conveniently into the kind of analysis provided by the radical approach to public administration in that its critical analysis of the dynamics of bureaucracy is tied to an analysis of the dynamics of the wider society and to the psycho-social dynamics of public 'welfare' agencies. It also fits very well into the analysis provided by Offe (1975) and Habermas (1975) of the 'crisis of the state'.

According to these theorists late capitalist societies consist of three main subsystems: the economic system, concerned with the production of goods and services; the sociocultural system, concerned with the values, traditions and expectations of the population; and the political-administrative system, through the provision of social and welfare services. This system is subject to several potential crises. These, as we noted earlier, do not necessarily imply the imminent demise of the system but may be successfully resolved in a variety of ways.

Crises occur if one of the systems fails to deliver what is required by the system as a whole. Thus an *economic* crisis occurs if the economic system fails to provide sufficient goods and services; a *rationality* crisis occurs if the political system fails to deliver a rational balance of decisions between the interests of capital on the one hand and the population at large on the other; a *legitimation* crisis results from the withdrawal of assent and loyalty as a result of the political system's failure to provide sufficient social and welfare programs; and a *motivational* crisis occurs when the patterns of shared values, traditions and expectations among the general population are not maintained.

In this analysis the dependence of Marxist theory on a single steering mechanism in capitalist societies is extended by the observation that in late capitalist societies the role of the state has reached such proportions as to constitute a second, administrative, steering mechanism. Moreover it is the steering mechanism of the state, that is, public administration, which is central in the resolution of the various crises immanent in the structures of late capitalist society.

As Pusey (1983) points out, however, Habermas' work appears to ignore the logic of his own argument in this regard. That is, Habermas fails to provide an adequate account of '. . . how crises of rationality and legitimacy become manifest in the very place where they must, for the sake of the whole argument, have their greatest impact, i.e. '*in the sphere of organisational behaviour*' (Pusey 1983, p. 17). In particular Pusey argues, the most important sphere of organisational behaviour is that of public administration.

> Where then, and how, is a legitimation crisis most likely to appear? My own answer is that wherever it originates it must, on the logic of Habermas' own very persuasive theory, break out and find expression *in the organisational processes of the departments of the state, i.e., in the public service.*
>
> (Pusey 1983, p. 17)

This argument fits well with our previous discussion and analysis of the inadequacy of the traditional views of the separation of politics from administration, fact from value, theory from practice and rationality from preference. It also fits well with our previous observation of the changes occurring in the relative roles of politicians and administrators. It agrees with the logic of the 'vicious circle' argument put forward by Crozier and exemplified in Pusey's previous work (1976) and the work of other researchers into educational and organisational behaviour, especially those inclined towards the radical paradigm. Pusey summarises his position:

> We now know that, contrary to prevailing assumptions . . . senior public servants are *not* mere executors and implementors of policies designed by elected politicians and that they are instead centrally involved in the creation and constitution of policy. This surely means that these higher public servants must experience the contradictions of late capitalist society in a very immediate way. Whereas the ordinary citizen has some considerable leeway in which to escape or buffer legitimation deficits, the senior civil servant's work is defined by the demand that he or she should somehow reconcile the collision between the 'steering imperatives' on the one hand and moral expectations on the other.
>
> (Pusey 1983, p. 18)

Thus, it would seem, public servants and senior public administrators in particular, are inevitably at the centre of the crisis of the state.

What then shall we do?

If the above argument is accepted then it seems clear that the immanent crisis of the state is caught up particularly in the crisis of public administration or, to put it perhaps more properly, the crisis of public administration is inevitable given the crisis of legitimation to which late capitalist society is prone. We have argued above that such crises are not necessarily portents of imminent collapse but are more likely provocative of certain resolutions depending on the factors at work in particular historical circumstances. What kinds of resolution might be expected in the current circumstances?

The fundamental difficulty seems to be that outlined in our previous analysis of the disabling pattern of the vicious circle; that is the psycho-social sphere of our human affairs is being increasingly invaded or displaced by the formal (authority) or technical (instrumental) dimensions of an increasingly organised society. As we saw in our previous examples the outcomes of such a process are almost inevitably some form of motivational crisis linked to an increasing legitimation crisis, as attempts to tighten up the steering mechanisms of the organisation frustrate more and more the achievement of psycho-social satisfactions. Habermas calls this process the 'colonisation of the life-world' in which the specific *economic* processes of 'purposive-rational action' produce 'both a loss of moral meaning in day-to-day life, and a diminution of freedom' (Giddens 1983, p. 326).

One possible resolution of this crisis is that foreshadowed by Weber in his reference to the key power of the state being the power of physical violence. This observation would seem to point us in the direction of massive increases in the repressive apparatuses of the state in order to sustain 'purposive-rational action' in the economic sphere and repress any significant expression of the legitimation and motivational crises which result. The British coalminer's strike of 1984–5 could be interpreted within such a framework. Clearly the loss of freedom which is consequent on this kind of resolution brings with it some fairly severe disadvantages for substantial sections of the population and is therefore inherently destabilising for the system—in the long term at least.

Another, and to my mind preferable, resolution is that which may be possible through the recreation of a sense of community. I have argued elsewhere (Bates 1984) that the growth of the Iron Cage of institutional society so dreaded by Weber is evident in contemporary society; indeed that our development of certain administrative techniques of hierarchy and coercion have been immensely destructive of community.

> . . . the administrative destruction of community was historically based upon the de-rationalisation, de-moralisation and de-politicisation of individuals and the transformation of their social, cultural, psychological, linguistic and political consciousness through the rhetoric of the One Best System, into the hierarchical structures and processes of the institutional society.
>
> (Bates 1984, p. 76)

Since it is unlikely that we can rid ourselves of bureaucracy or organisation—indeed it is unlikely that we should wish to do so completely—the resolution of the present crisis would seem to depend on the re-establishment of a new balance between the formal (authority), technical (instrumental) and psycho-social (human) dimensions of our organisational society. There would appear to be two major prospects for achieving this; both speak to the nature of organisational life and to the moral nature of the life we share.

The first of these prospects is the reconceptualisation of administration as a dialectical process, rather than as a technique of hierarchical control. The work of Watkins (1985) is particularly important here. Watkins argues for a theory of administration which reasserts the importance of human agency and sees administration as a matter of dialectics within a conception of the totality of social life.

> Change, progress or decline, and stability are explained through a dialectical relationship whereby people and structures interact to engender an ongoing transformative process. For in a dialectical theory of administration social reality is perceived as in a state of constant transformation, largely as a result of the mediating capacity of human consciousness.
> (Watkins 1985, p. 3)

Such a position is echoed by Wilson.

> Management . . . is a dialectical interplay of persons whose roles change from one part of the system to another, and who remain open to dialogue and discussion in their continuing concern for the care of public things.
> (Wilson 1985, p. 139)

This particular view of administration takes as its starting point the Marxian admonition to understand social phenomena in terms of their own special and particular features, seeing them in concrete terms and detail rather than as abstractions. Secondly, it implies that organisations should be seen as totalities and as part of wider totalities, rather than fragmented chains of bounded means-end hierarchies. Thirdly, a dialectical view of administration insists on an understanding of the contradictions that exist within social structures and their importance as an impetus towards the resolution of tensions and thus in transformations of the totality.

Finally, the dialectical view of administration insists on the importance of praxis, that is, in the importance of not separating the theoretical off from the practical but of encouraging the interplay of experience and reflection focused on concrete situations (see Watkins 1985).

The second and related prospect involves the democratisation of organisational and institutional life. This may initially be seen as a political program but in fact is an attempt to deny the convenient fiction of the separation of politics from administration endemic in the traditions of public administration. For essentially what is being argued here is that representative democracy which separates off political from personal action for the bulk of the population is instrumental in depoliticising the majority of people. As a result of this realisation it seems clear that the repoliticisation of the personal, psycho-social sphere depends very much upon the democratisation of the organisations in which people work and with which they must inevitably interact. This is the concern of a number of recent theorists whose work is outlined by Watson (1985 in this series).

Macpherson (1983) argues that any such changes are dependent on two prerequisite conditions

> One is a change in people's consciousness (or unconsciousness), from seeing themselves and acting as essentially consumers to seeing themselves and

> acting as exerters and enjoyers of the exertion and development of their own capacities.
>
> (Macpherson 1983, p. 579)

As we have seen, the logic of our current formal/technical emphases in education systems militates against this and the success of this project depends very much on the transformation of educational practice.

> The other prerequisite is a great reduction of the present social and economic inequality, since that inequality . . . requires a non-participatory party system to hold the society together.
>
> (Macpherson 1983, pp. 579–80)

In this respect the work of Salaman (1981) and his conceptualisation of organisation as a class system designed to foster and maintain inequalities and ensure the maintenance of hierarchies of domination is also instructive as is the earlier work of Braverman (1974).

Each of these analyses points to both the difficulties and the necessity of developing a participatory democracy in administrative and organisational structures as the prerequisite to the establishment of a wider participatory democracy in which human agency can be claimed by a much greater proportion of the population than is presently the case. A dialectical view of administration and an emphasis on the democratisation of organisation and administrative life would appear to be major achievements in the move towards a more democratic and humane society. They are also major achievements in the redefinition of public administration and the resolution of the crisis of the state.

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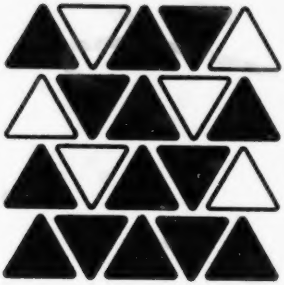
Readings



1

Bureaucrats and politicians in Western democracies: Introduction

Joel Aberbach, Robert Putnam & Bert Rockman

In the tumultuous Munich winter of 1918, toward the end of his notable career as a social theorist, Max Weber was asked by his students to speak on the political choices facing postwar Germany. Before commenting on the issues of the day, he set out to describe two powerful currents of history that ran beneath the flickering surface of events. Contemporary politics, Weber claimed, was being shaped, first, by the emergence of modern bureaucracy—most especially the growing state apparatus, increasingly led by technically trained, professional career administrators. The second trend Weber saw, to some extent oblique to the first, was the rise of a new class of professional politicians, their influence based not on inherited social status, but rather on mass political parties claiming the membership and the suffrage of millions of ordinary citizens. Weber's own monarchical and individualistic sympathies caused him to view both trends with some distaste and distrust, but he was convinced that inexorable historical tendencies would make this the century of the professional party politician and of the professional state bureaucrat.[1]

Looking back more than a half-century later, we can see that Weber's insights were remarkably prescient. In the advanced nations of the West, the century from 1870 to 1970 saw innumerable social and political changes, but in terms of the policymaking process the most significant of these has been precisely the steadily growing power of professional party politicians and of permanent civil servants. These twin trends have unfolded at different rates and in somewhat different phases in the several countries of Europe and North America, but in broad outline the patterns are visible everywhere.

On the political side, the parliaments and cabinets of mid-Victorian Europe were still largely the preserves of aristocrats and local gentry, amateurs who (as Weber said) lived for politics, but not from politics. A century later a few such figures can still be found in the European political elites, but they are now vastly outnumbered by new men and women of power, risen mostly from middle-class (and occasionally working-class) backgrounds, well-educated, committed to a lifetime in politics, dependent on the electoral fortunes of their particular party and on their own success in playing the game of party politics. In the career lines of politicians, party and legislative ladders have increasingly merged. If the first half of the period (1870 to 1920) saw the capture of European parliaments by parties, in the sense that access to legislative (and hence cabinet) leadership became controlled by parties, the half-century after 1920 saw a complementary "parliamentarization" of party leadership.[2]

The change in the character and power of civil servants over these hundred years is even more striking. The scope of the liberal state of 1870 was still relatively small, and the tasks of civil servants were still largely clerical. Policy decisions could reasonably be taken by the leisured amateurs around the cabinet table, and the highest posts in the civil service were filled as often by patronage appointments as by competitive examination. By 1970 the state had expanded fantastically in both size and task. Real total public expenditure had increased twentyfold to thirtyfold in ten decades. The gross national product was also growing, to be sure, but the share spent by the state was rising several times faster. The inevitable concomitant was an explosion in the size of the government bureaucracy. In 1870 the staff of the British civil service, for example, totaled just over 50,000 men and women. By 1970 this figure had risen to nearly 800,000. The one permanent growth industry of the modern world, it seems, is the state.

The tasks of the bureaucracy increased in complexity as well. By 1970 civil servants throughout the West were deciding how to restructure the steel industry, how to design an actuarially sound pension scheme, where to locate airports, how to brake inflation, and a thousand other such issues. Throughout this century the tendency toward governmental omnicompetence has accelerated virtually everywhere in the West. In tiny Denmark, for example, the annual output of pages of laws and regulations increased about tenfold from 1911 to 1971, and in the United States the size of the *Federal Register* (the official publication of administrative regulations) quadrupled in barely a decade, from 1966 to 1975.[3] To accommodate these trends, Western civil services have become increasingly specialized, highly professionalized, and unquestionably powerful—a cadre of experts in the running of the modern state.

Weber's thesis—part chronicle and part prophecy—thus has been strikingly confirmed: at the levers of power in the modern state stand these two uncertain partners, the elected party politician and the professional state bureaucrat. Indeed, so familiar is this pattern that some effort is required to recognize that in historical terms it is far from "normal." Outside nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe and North America, leadership in most political systems has not reflected this division of labor between elected politicians and career bureaucrats. "Aylmer in his study of Stuart administration points out that as late as the reign of Charles I there were not even rudimentary distinctions between politicians and administrators; 'policy in the modern sense scarcely existed.' "[4] Similarly, although most countries of the Third World today have organizations labeled "legislatures," "parties," and "bureaucracies," in few of these systems is power actually divided between elected politicians and career administrators. In fact, institutionalization of mass-based parties and of professionally staffed bureaucracies is widely taken to be the hallmark of a modern political system. The problematic relationship between these two institutions is perhaps the distinctive puzzle of the contemporary state, reflecting as it does the clash between the dual and conflicting imperatives of technical effectiveness and democratic responsiveness.[5]

On no single dilemma has more ink been spilled by political scientists in the last quarter-century than on the relative power and roles of the bureaucracy, on the one hand, and of representative institutions, such as parties and legislatures, on the other. Much of the debate quite appropriately has stressed normative issues, while the empirical contributions have emphasized institutional analysis.[6] Our focus in what follows is complementary, but different; for we want to ask not about bureaucratic and political institutions, but about bureaucrats and politicians as policymakers. How are they different? Indeed, *are* they different? Do they come from different backgrounds? Have they different priorities? Do they consider different criteria when making decisions? Do they regard public affairs and the process of policymaking differently? Have they different world views? What do these differences, if any, imply for their relationships and for their performance as policymakers? What difference would it make if all important government decisions were made by civil servants instead of by party politicians, or vice versa?

We fully recognize that answers to such questions turn in part on institutional and structural issues—on the organizational frameworks within which bureaucrats and politicians act, struggle, calculate, seek advantage and advancement. But we seek to move the discussion forward by examining bureaucrats and politicians as individual policymakers, drawing on national surveys of elected politicians and senior civil servants in seven advanced countries: Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States. Before describing our methods of inquiry in detail, let us first—as a way of orienting our inquiry—consider several possible images of the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats.

Image I: Policy/Administration

The earliest theory about the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats was in many ways the simplest: politicians make policy; civil servants administer. Politicians make decisions; bureaucrats merely implement them.

On the Continent, this traditional identification of politics and policy (in contradistinction to administration) is embodied in language itself (*politique, Politik, politica*). In the United States, an early generation of progressive reformers emphasized the sharp distinction between the spheres of politics and administration. Woodrow Wilson, for example, wrote:

> Administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics. Administrative questions are not political questions . . . The field of administration is a field of business. It is removed from the hurry and strife of politics . . . It is a part of political life only as the methods of the counting-house are a part of the life of society; only as machinery is part of the manufactured product.[7]

Frank Goodnow spoke for the dominant view at the turn of this century, arguing that the functions of the state are naturally divided into the expression of the public will (politics) and the execution of that will (administration),[8] and Luther Gulick added that these functions must be kept institutionally separate: "We are faced by two heterogeneous functions, 'politics' and 'administration,' the combination of which cannot be undertaken within the structure of the administration without producing inefficiency."[9]

The official norm in every state is that civil servants obediently serve their political "masters."[10] This image of the division of labor between politicians and bureaucrats exalts the glittering authority of the former and cloaks the role of the latter in gray robes of anonymous neutrality. It is congenial for both figures, and not surprisingly it remains a prominent part of the mythology of practitioners, particularly in Europe. As B. Guy Peters has noted, "For administrators, this presumed separation of administration and politics allows them to engage in politics without the bother of being held accountable politically for the outcomes of their actions, [and] without the interference of political actors who might otherwise make demands upon them for the modification of those policies . . . The separation of politics and administration also allows a certain latitude to politicians . . . [permitting] many of the difficult decisions of modern government to be made by individuals who will not have to face the public at a subsequent election."[11] In fact, this image does reflect the formal contrast between what happens on the floor of parliament, as major issues are debated and "decided," and what happens instead in bureaucratic warrens, as routine applications for permits and pensions are processed.

Weber himself thought that what we have termed Image I was the ideal relationship between politicians and administrators, but he recognized that it was an improbable one, for the distinction between discretionary (political) and nondiscretionary (administrative) decisions is ultimately untenable. "Every problem, no matter how technical it might seem, can assume political significance and its solution can be decisively influenced by political considerations."[12] The distinction between policy and administration, between deciding and implementing, resembles the fabled Cheshire cat—upon examination, its substance fades, leaving only a mocking smirk.[13]

Moreover, even if civil servants wanted merely to follow orders—and there is some evidence that many honestly do—that is a practical impossibility. Politicians lack the expertise, the information, and even the time to decide all the thousands of policy questions that face a modern government each year. As one frustrated British politician has written, "Ministers may bring with them broad ideas of how future policy should develop. But in the transformation of policy goals into realistic plans, in the execution of those plans, and still more, in policy responses to new and unexpected developments, Ministers are largely, if not wholly, dependent on their official [civil service] advisers."[14] And where bureaucrats are less self-effacing than in Britain, their propensity to work at cross-purposes from party politicians is greater still. Weber saw the point very clearly: "Under normal conditions, the power position of a fully developed bureaucracy is always overtowering. The 'political master' finds himself in the position of a 'dilettante' who stands opposite the 'expert' facing the trained official who stands within the management of administration."[15]

In short, Image I assumes a degree of hierarchy of authority, of simplicity of decision, and of effective political supremacy that now seems unrealistic to students of modern government. Discretion, not merely for deciding individual cases, but for crafting the content of most legislation, has passed from the legislature to the executive. In most countries (though not in the United States) initiation of major bills is effectively a monopoly of the executive, and within the executive branch elected politicians are everywhere outnumbered and outlasted by career civil servants.[16] Skilled and experienced bureaucrats have gained a predominant influence over the evolution of the agenda for decision. "As a result," some even claim, "bureaucratic politics rather than party politics has become the dominant theater of decision in the modern state."[17] Whether or not this extreme view is accurate, even the most conventionally minded participants in the process admit that bureaucrats today do more than merely implement decisions taken elsewhere. Only 1 percent of the senior civil servants we interviewed and only 15 percent of the members of parliament agreed unreservedly with the view that "a senior civil servant should limit his activity to the precise application of the law."[18] He should not, because as a practical matter, he cannot. At least at the more senior levels of government, Image I is not an adequate account of the division of labor between politicians and bureaucrats.

Image II: Facts/Interests

This second image assumes that *both* politicians and civil servants participate in making policy, but that they make distinctive contributions. Civil servants bring facts and knowledge; politicians, interests and values. Civil servants bring neutral expertise—will it work?—while politicians bring political sensitivity—will it fly? Civil servants thus emphasize the technical efficacy of policy, while politicians emphasize its responsiveness to relevant constituencies.

The logic behind this image has been most clearly articulated by Herbert Simon. He suggests that we regard "the process of human choice as a process of 'drawing conclusions from premises.' It is therefore the *premise* (and a large number of these are combined in every decision) rather than the whole *decision* that serves as the smallest unit of analysis." Arguing that the premises involved in policymaking can be classified as either factual (descriptive) or evaluative (preferential), he proposes that we seek "procedural devices permitting a more effective separation of the factual and ethical elements in decisions," and "a more effective division of labor between the policy-forming and administrative agencies." In this division of labor administrators provide expertise, while "democratic institutions [composed of elected politicians] find their principal justification as a procedure for the validation of value judgments."[19]

Image II finds expression in contrasts between "political rationality" and "administrative rationality." Fritz Morstein Marx, for example, observed that

> administrative rationality often has little appeal to the political mind, whether in the executive branch or in the legislative body. The political decision-maker, bent upon his aims, is often impatient with dispassionate reasoning, except in small doses. He does not like to face the dreadful array of pertinent facts, especially when he is cast in the role of the special pleader . . . Exceptional political maturity is required for public opinion and party leaders to welcome the role of the bureaucracy in putting proposed policy to the acid test of cause-and-effect relationships.

The role of bureaucratic expertise, as Morstein Marx saw it, is to supplement the "unrestrained interaction of political forces" and the "crude test of political influence" as a basis for public policy.[20] Karl Mannheim put a more critical twist on the same fundamental distinction in his passing, but insightful, observation that "the fundamental tendency of all bureaucratic thought is to turn all problems of politics into problems of administration."[21] To this others have replied (referring to politicians' concerns with patronage, logrolling, and special interests) that the fundamental tendency of political thought is to turn problems of administration into problems of politics.

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Image II is related to typologies of policymakers in nondemocratic states too, as in the common distinction in Communist regimes between "reds" and "experts." But in the case of democracies, Image II assigns to politicians the special task of articulating and balancing and mediating diverse claims and divergent interests, of formulating and reformulating and resolving social conflicts. As expressed in Image II, the work of politicians reflects a conception of the public interest based on the rights of contending interests to put forth their demands, whereas the work of civil servants entails a holistic conception of the public interest based on objectively fixed standards and informed judgment.[22] In this theory, while bureaucrats should be responsive to political direction, their responsiveness

> is not intended to make the bureaucracy a partisan fighter for politically defined policy. Of course, insofar as government functions as the coordinator of interests in accordance with its program, it is bound to favor certain interests and to show itself indifferent or hostile toward others. That is a matter of the political course and properly within the responsibility of the government in power . . . For itself, however, the bureaucracy is not entitled to acknowledge or even to cultivate friends and foes among the organized interests. If it did, it could not be impartial. It must seek to advance the general interest and to guard its neutrality toward the special interests.[23]

As later chapters will show, Image II finds some resonance in our empirical evidence, including in particular our findings about the distinctive sorts of criteria that politicians and bureaucrats bring to bear on discussions of public issues. However, a number of students of government and policymaking have adduced evidence in recent years that seriously calls into question the accuracy of this image as a comprehensive account of the division of labor between bureaucrats and politicians. On the one hand, the increasing educational standards and professionalization of politicians reduces the plausibility of Image II's suggestion that bureaucrats monopolize expertise.[24] More importantly, numerous studies have called attention to the role of bureaucratic agencies in mobilizing and mediating sectoral interests.

"In the quest for power," writes Francis E. Rourke, "every executive agency is heavily dependent upon its skill at cultivating public support. The administrator, like the politician, must nurse his constituency to ensure his own survival, and the task of creating a continuing fund of public support is an indispensable part of bureaucratic statecraft."[25] Quite apart from these perhaps self-serving efforts of bureaucratic entrepreneurs, contemporary administrators, some have argued, are inevitably thrust into the role of interest management. Legislators unable to reach consensus on general policy often effectively delegate the reconciliation of conflicting interests to administrative agencies—for example, in the bland charge to grant licenses "in the public interest." As Rourke has said, "bureaucratic policy making in domestic areas commonly represents a reconciliation of conflicting group interests as much as it does the application of expertise toward the solution of particular problems."[26] As early as 1936, Pendleton Herring claimed that "the solution of the liberal democratic state must lie in establishing a working relationship between the bureaucrats and the special interests—a relationship that will enable the former to carry out the purpose of the state and the latter to realize their own ends."[27] Some American scholars have traced this more "political" function of bureaucrats to peculiar features of American national politics, such as the fragmentation of authority,[28] and we shall return to this theme of American exceptionalism later. But it is relevant here to note that observers of the European scene have described a comparable phenomenon. Renate Mayntz and Fritz Scharpf, referring to policymaking in Germany, for example, claim that "it is the ministries and not parliament or the political parties to which organized interests turn first, where they argue their demands in detail, and to whom they present information in support of their claims."[29] In responding to these representations, European bureaucrats are hardly engaged in the neutral exercise of antiseptic expertise. James B. Christoph has said of the British case, "While part of the job of civil servants is to analyze, verify, and cost the claims of such groups, and forward them to higher centers of decision, it would be unnatural if officials did not identify in some way with the interests of their clienteles, and within the overall framework of current government policy advance claims finding favor in the department."[30] To accommodate such observations, we need to formulate yet a third account of the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats.

Image III: Energy/Equilibrium

According to Image III, *both* bureaucrats and politicians engage in policymaking, and *both* are concerned with politics. The real distinction between them is this: whereas politicians articulate broad, diffuse interests of unorganized individuals, bureaucrats mediate narrow, focused interests of organized clienteles. In this interpretation of the division of labor, politicians are passionate, partisan, idealistic, even ideological; bureaucrats are, by contrast, prudent, centrist, practical, pragmatic. Politicians seek publicity, raise innovative issues, and are energizing to the policy system, whereas bureaucrats prefer the back room, manage incremental adjustments, and provide policy equilibrium (per Webster's, "a state of balance between opposing forces or actions"). Let us explore this image in more detail.

Reflecting on British policymaking, Richard Rose has noted: "In theory, ministers are meant to communicate the ends of policy to civil servants, who then devise administrative means to carry out the wishes of their minister. In this formulation, the roles of politician and civil servant are separate and complementary. In practice, policymaking usually develops dialectically; both politicians and civil servants review political and administrative implications of a major policy."[31] For this reason sensitivity to political interests is a necessary part of the job of a senior civil servant. But the interests to which civil servants are sensitive are generally quite focused, for their world is mostly defined by departmental boundaries, and thus the interests of the department's organized clientele bulk particularly large. As a Canadian civil servant has observed bluntly, "That's part of the department's job, to advocate the case of the groups it works with."[32]

The role of a civil servant brings him into frequent contact with his department's clientele. The following description of British civil servants could easily be applied to their counterparts in other countries: "[In] both the pre- and post-legislative stages civil servants are in steady contact with those pressure groups likely to be affected by proposed changes—obtaining technical information on the anticipated effects of new rules, bargaining from the knowledge of what is apt to be their minister's final position, getting consent in advance whenever possible, satisfying the unwritten British requirement that consultation with interests precede government action, testing for their minister the temperature of the political water about to be stirred up."[33] In many countries this process of consultation has spawned hundreds of specialized consultative committees dominated by civil servants and private members often nominated by civil servants. On these committees party politicians are most notable by their relative absence. Through such channels civil servants and interest groups enter into a symbiotic relationship.[34] From it emerges what in Britain is termed the "Whitehall consensus," in which it becomes quite unclear whether the primary initiative comes from the bureaucrats or the interest groups.

In sum, in Image III the role of civil servants is one of registering the resultant of the parallelogram of organized political forces. It is important to note three limitations on this administrative process of interest aggregation. First, unorganized interests are largely ignored. As Mayntz and Scharpf remark about the German case, for example: "Because of their limited work capacity, the federal departments restrict their search for relevant situational information to contacts with the major organized interests. This means that they can [not] and do not systematically inquire into the situation and wishes of socioeconomic groups which are not organized and have a low potential of engaging in conflict with the administration, or of creating political difficulties."[35] Politicians, by contrast, have some incentive to articulate unorganized interests in their unending search for novel and attractive electoral appeals. Samuel Huntington has noted, in the case of the United States, "Congress's position as the representative of unorganized interests of individuals."[36] In Europe, where party strength reduces the need for individual politicians to engage in retail coalition building, their capacity for attending to broader, mass-based interests is greater still.

The second limitation on interest aggregation by bureaucrats is that typically they do not bridge the divisions between functional sectors. Damgaard's description of administrative policymaking in Denmark is typical: "Most ministries have well-organized clientele, such as farmers, workers, businessmen, students, teachers, or retired people. The overall political function involves making decisions affecting those groups' diverse interests. In carrying out this function, politicians get only a little help from their civil servants because the latter usually identify with a certain section of society or, at least, do not want any trouble with the groups in question . . . Therefore, what we actually find is not rational policymaking, but 'segmented incrementalism' in terms of the allocation of resources and services."[37] Civil servants necessarily are tuned to a rather narrow band of the spectrum of political interests, whereas politicians receive and transmit over a somewhat broader band. Mediating among interests within a single sector is largely the responsibility of bureaucrats, but cross-sector aggregation of interests—farmers and consumers or labor unions and management—is typically the province of politicians.

The third distinctive limitation of administrative interest aggregation is that bureaucrats typically take the existing parallelogram of political forces as a given, whereas politicians can and often do relax that constraint. The more extensive political contacts and skills of the politician enable him or her to mobilize a wider range of potentially destabilizing political forces. Moreover, political ideals and ideologies can provide politicians with a point of critical leverage beyond the existing correlation of forces—a sense of how society might be organized differently, some notion of how to get there, and an emotional commitment that is sometimes infectious.

Indeed, one striking difference that many observers have noted between politicians and bureaucrats is one of temperament. Politicians—at least many of them—have ideals and partisan passions in a degree quite alien to most civil servants. For instance, more than twice as many British MPs, as contrasted with their civil service compatriots, agree unreservedly with the view that "only when a person devotes himself to an ideal or cause does life become meaningful."[38] One civil servant has written: "There is no need for the administrator to be a man of ideas. His distinguishing quality should be rather a certain freedom from ideas. The idealism and the most vicious appetites of the populace are equal before him."[39]

Prudence, practicality, moderation, and avoidance of risk are the preferred traits of a civil servant; only a politician could have termed extremism a virtue and moderation a vice. The difference in temperament can be traced in large part to career channeling. "The merit bureaucracy is not the place for those who want . . . to rise fast, to venture far, or to stand on their own."[40] On the other hand, electoral and party politics reward one who will dare greatly and become identified with larger passions and ideals, "a tribune of the people," as Aneurin Bevan said, "coming to make his voice heard in the seats of power."[41] Short-run political feasibility is a much greater constraint for the bureaucratic mind than for this breed of politician.

Both politicians and bureaucrats, in Image III, need political skills, but not the same political skills. They may be of the same genus, but they are not the same species. The natural habitat of the politician is the public podium, whereas the bureaucrat is found seated at a committee table. Christoph's observation about Britain applies more widely: "The committee is the chief instrument of government . . . Civil servants lubricate this process in their own special way: they are renowned as masters of the arts of committeemanship, of achieving consensus whenever possible through compromise behind closed doors."[42]

A British civil servant summarizes his criterion for political success (and by implicit contrast, the criterion that politicians would use instead): "The administrator steers what may appear to be a craven course among the various pressures of public and still more of semi-public opinion and the opinion of groups, and his concern is to come off with victory, not in the sense that his opinion prevails, for he has no right to one, but in the sense that at the end he is still upright, and the forces around him have achieved a momentary balance."[43]

How do these differences between politicians and bureaucrats, as embodied in Image III, affect their performances as policymakers? In the first place, the two groups are likely to place somewhat different issues on the public agenda, for issues arise for them in somewhat different ways. As Mayntz and Scharpf report from their study of policymaking in the German bureaucracy, "the impulses for initiatives originating in the [administrative] section come from the observation of developments in the field, from contact with the clientele, or from the feedback produced by presently operating programs."[44] Politicians, on the other hand, have political antennae that are sensitive to more diffuse sorts of public discontent. Moreover, their more fully developed partisan ideologies mean that their attention is apt to be aroused by discrepancies between social realities and political ideals. They are more likely than bureaucrats to nominate for the public agenda problems that are highlighted by philosophical principles, such as equality or liberty, even though those problems lie beyond the bounds of the current social consensus. Though bureaucrats are in some senses political, they could hardly have produced the neoconservative policies of Britain's prime minister Margaret Thatcher, nor would they have come up with the populist proposals of the Labour radical Anthony Wedgwood Benn. As Richard Rose has asserted, "The distinctive claim of parties is to review questions of public choice in the light of more general values and principles."[45]

Inherent in administrative policymaking as described by Image III is a sense of the near inevitability of the status quo, likely produced more by procedural or temperamental conservatism than by conservative political ideology. A close observer of British policymakers reports that "in the absence of contrary instructions from their political masters, officials normally frame policy programs which fit within the context of the existing objectives pursued by their department. Innovation and radical change are not commonly the product of proposals generated within the Civil Service."[46] This special sensitivity of bureaucrats to precedent and continuity is hardly peculiar to Britain. A study of high-level civil servants in Germany, for example, concludes that policymaking for them "means overwhelmingly to improve on existing policy rather than starting something entirely new."[47]

It is not merely a preference for the quiet life that biases administrative decision making against radical change. Because of their close interaction with relevant interests and their aversion to public controversy, civil servants are particularly prone to engage in anticipatory conflict management, seeking consensus among the relevant participants before a proposal is actually put forward. "This means in effect that the operative units of the bureaucracy will minimize the conflict potential of their projects by adjusting their content to the opposition they meet or anticipate. More often than not, the result of such adjustments is a reactive and incremental rather than active policy."[48] Administrative policymaking is thus a kind of *liberum veto* group politics, in which strenuous objections from any quarter are likely to be accepted.[49]

> Bureaucrats may, from a sense of professionalism and public spirit, strive to achieve the public interest. But if they are left to live with organized groups without political supervision, they may find it impractical, politically dangerous, and finally unnecessary and uncivil to define the public interest in ways offensive to the most active, powerful, even cooperative participants.[50]

Richard Rose has aptly termed this type of politics "government by directionless consensus . . . In the absence of a forceful partisan initiative, providing both protection and direction, the simplest course of action is for administrators to seek out the lowest common denominator of opinions among affected interests . . . The process of building consensus becomes the end toward which government works."[51] Of course, the consensus of opinion may change, allowing policy to follow in its train, but lacking partisan ideologies or political contacts outside the narrow range of organized interests, bureaucrats are unlikely themselves to stimulate this sort of change. Because the pattern of "consultation" is designed to provide stability for the existing equilibrium among the affected interests, the result is more likely to be what Beer has termed "pluralistic stagnation" and what others have labeled "liberal corporatism."[52]

It would, of course, be a mistake to assume that politicians are wholly immune to this type of policymaking. But Image III asserts that broader, longer-range, more controversial issues are likely to be addresed, if at all, only by politicians. This is particularly true of issues that involve some redistribution in the underlying social allocation of power. For example, Gerhard Lehmbruch has contrasted the patterns of German policymaking on cartel legislation, which involved marginal adjustments within the business sector, and on codetermination, which involved a fundamental clash between the interests of labor and management. In the former case, "the essential bargaining took place between the administration and business representatives and largely outside the party system," while in the latter case, "it was no longer the administration that served as the 'turntable,' but rather the party system." Lehmbruch summarizes:

> On the one hand, if there exists a high level of conflict (particularly on "redistributive" issues), it is probable that the party system possesses a greater capacity for consensus-building, since its flexibility is greater and thresholds of consensus are lower. To put it the other way around, consensus-building and problem-solving in a corporatist subsystem of interest representation depend on a rather low level of conflict intensity because of the high threshold imposed by (de facto or de jure) unanimity rules which are essential to its functioning.[53]

For these reasons, Image III asserts, the policymaking influence of civil servants tends to diminish or even vanish at moments of acute social crisis or major reforms. Bernard Gournay notes: "The high administration seems to have had no major or direct influence on the outcome of political crises in France during the last decades."[54] Mayntz and Scharpf report from Germany that

> policy initiatives which are long-range in time perspective, of broad scope, and deal with controversial questions, are usually of central origin. If one traces the genesis of those policy decisions made in the past few years which possess these characteristics of an active policy, they are found to originate quite often within the political executive (cabinet) or parliament.[55]

Mattei Dogan concludes that

> most major reforms, some of a revolutionary nature, introduced throughout liberated Europe just after the war, were neither inspired

> nor formulated by the high administration, even though there were a few important exceptions such as the Beveridge plan for British social security. The directing staffs of political parties were, at that time, the principal actors and enactors.[56]

The role of policy innovator and energizer might seem to be peculiarly cast for left-wing politicians. Richard Crossman, a leading Labour party minister, argued for example that "if a politician enters Whitehall without a manifesto, without a programme, he is lost; and they [the civil service] will tell him what to do, although the only point of his being there is to be a catalytic irritant in the departments."[57] But a strikingly similar analysis was offered by one of his Conservative opponents: "The minister should offer philosophical, intellectual leadership . . . Only ministers can make major changes; proposals generated by civil servants are bound to put safety first."[58] Canadian prime minister Pierre Trudeau put the matter with characteristic directness: "We aren't here just to manage departments; we want to see change."[59]

It is occasionally supposed that in some Continental cases, such as France, administrators can provide this sort of impetus for major reform. But after a careful review, Alfred Diamant concluded: "The French experience would indicate that, in fact, during periods of political indecision the *grand corps* do not really govern the country, they simply continue routine operations, maintain the status quo, and protect their own interests. It would seem, particularly from the experience of the Fourth Republic, that under then prevailing conditions the administration could carry on from day to day, but it could not carry through radical innovations. There was no lack of ideas, plans, proposals, but in the absence of a determined political will these plans remained dormant."[60] This, then, is the division of labor between politicians and bureaucrats as portrayed in Image III. We shall see that in certain important respects it is consistent with the evidence from our surveys.

Image IV: The Pure Hybrid

It will not have escaped the attentive reader that our first three images suggest a progressively greater degree of overlap between the roles of bureaucrat and politician, nor that the intellectual origins of the three conceptions are progressively more recent. Image I, which offers the starkest differentiation, emerged in the last half of the nineteenth century, as the Weberian distinction between professional bureaucrats and party politicians was itself crystallizing. Image II, which admits a certain policymaking role for civil servants, can be roughly dated to the first half of the twentieth century, whereas Image III, which concedes to bureaucrats a rather more "political" role, has been extracted primarily from writings of the last several decades. Assuming a rough, if lagged, correspondence between government realities and scholarly interpretations, this progression is at least consistent with the notion that in behavioral terms the two roles have been converging—perhaps reflecting, as some have argued, a "politicization" of the bureaucracy and a "bureaucratization" of politics.[61] Carrying this notion to its logical conclusion, Image IV suggests speculatively that the last quarter of this century is witnessing the virtual disappearance of the Weberian distinction between the roles of politician and bureaucrat, producing what we might label a "pure hybrid."

To be sure, ever since the appearance of cabinets responsible to parliaments (or presidents), ministers have occupied a Janus-like role at the top of departments, facing simultaneously inward as administrators and outward as political leaders, though perhaps giving special attention to one or the other facet of their complex role. But the trend that we are here addressing extends well beyond the long-established dualistic position of the minister.

The organizational format for this trend varies from country to country. In some systems such as France and Japan, a key factor is the high rate of personnel circulation between the political and administrative career ladders. An increasingly common pattern in the Fifth Republic, for example, has been for a bright and ambitious civil servant to enter a ministerial *cabinet,* where his political skills are honed, followed some years later by a move into the political elite (typically, though not always, in the ranks of the ruling party).[62] One such figure—President Giscard—has, of course, reached the very pinnacle of the French political system. A roughly similar syndrome has characterized career patterns in postwar Japan.[63]

In Britain and Germany, harbingers of the hybrid figure may be found in the introduction of politically sympathetic "outsiders" or "irregulars" into positions once reserved for career civil servants. In 1964 Harold Wilson imported into the central administration a small but potentially significant number of partisan appointees who were neither career civil servants nor MPs. The government of Edward Heath that followed created the post of "political secretary" to individual ministers and introduced a Central Policy Review Staff, peopled by numbers of what Americans would term "in-and-outers." None of these experiments were judged wholly successful by their sponsors, but all are symptomatic of a need felt by both parties for a type of official who combines substantive expertise with political commitment.[64]

In the German case, active party membership among senior civil servants has long been common, as has the presence of a substantial number of ex-bureaucrats in the Bundestag. A further step was taken by Willy Brandt's government after 1969, when it brought into the top layers of the Socialist-Liberal administration a sizable number of *Aussenseiter,* experts with long-standing ties to one of the coalition parties. Mayntz and Scharpf maintain that the function of such figures

> can be defined as the integration of politics with administration. More exactly, the divisional leaders have to articulate two sets of decision criteria with each other: those of technical knowledge and substantive expertise with those of political strategy . . . To be able to perform this integrating function, divisional leaders must be able to speak the language of the politician as well as of the bureaucrat, they must be men of two worlds as it were . . . This is in fact asking too much of many career civil servants and gives a distinct advantage to the external recruit with an unusual career, the marginal type with multiple reference groups—provided he is able to develop a second identity as a bureaucrat.[65]

In a number of countries the appearance of pure hybrids has been associated with an expansion of key central agencies, such as the cabinet office, the chancellery, and the White House staff, which have absorbed increasing numbers of political administrators in virtually every country of the West over the last decade. The best study of these "superbureaucrats" is the research of Colin Campbell and George Szablowski, initially in Canada and now being extended to Britain, the United States, and Switzerland. In the Canadian case, the staff members of these central agencies differ from more traditional civil servants in the broader, more flexible authority they enjoy; in their greater social representativeness and substantive innovativeness; and in their recognition of the legitimacy of politics—not merely in the sense of responsiveness to clientele interests, but in the broader sense that Image III ascribes to politicians alone. One intriguing organizational sign of the merging of the roles of politician and bureaucrat in Canada is the growing custom of ministers' delegating their attendance at cabinet committee meetings to their civil service aides.[66]

Still another interesting variation on this theme is the distinction within the Swedish central government between "ministries," small policymaking staffs working directly with cabinet ministers, and "administrative boards," much larger agencies charged with the day-to-day implementation of existing policies. Evidence from our own survey in Sweden verifies that ministry officials are significantly more "political" in background and outlook than their counterparts on the administrative boards.[67]

The line between political and administrative leadership has been traditionally more blurred in the United States than in Europe. Hugh Heclo's study of executive politics in Washington makes it clear that this blurring has accelerated in recent years. "If anything, the position of higher civil servants and the lines between political and career appointments have become even more complex and uncertain. 'In my mind,' said an intimate White House aide of a former President, 'the whole political-bureaucracy thing is all mixed up. I don't have a strong sense of where the line's drawn.' "[68]

Like us, Heclo finds that career officials hold nominally political positions, and conversely, that there is political influence over appointments to nominally civil service slots. "Whatever the intricacies of body counts in the personnel system, the major point is that somewhere in this smudgy zone between top presidential appointees and the several thousand officials below them, the vital interface of political administration occurs."[69] Heclo concludes:

> Political appointments to positions of executive leadership (once the domain of party men) have taken on more of the enlarged, specialized, and layered characteristics of the bureaucracy. Old-fashioned patronage influences in the civil service have been augmented by increased attention not only to controlling the bureaucracy but to identifying the higher civil service with the particular policies and purposes of the White House.[70]

In short: the bureaucratization of politics and the politicization of bureaucracy.

At the opposite end of Pennsylvania Avenue, further evidence for the emergence of our pure hybrid type could doubtless be found in the exploding profusion of congressional staffers, bound more tightly to their political patrons than most political executives, but increasingly expert and involved in substantive policymaking. The expansion of legislative staffs in this country and (to a much smaller degree) elsewhere has been justified as a way of enabling politicians to counterbalance the growing influence of the permanent executive. Some keen observers fear, however, that the real danger may lie in the subordination of political judgment in both branches of government to the overriding perspective of expertise.[71] In any event, the trend seems consistent with our tentative hypothesis about the convergence of the roles of bureaucrat and politician.

If this sort of convergence is indeed under way, it may mark the demise of what we may call the Weberian epoch of modern government, the analytic construct from which our study began. On the other hand, these conjectures remain speculative. Throughout the industrialized democracies today most policymakers still fall rather naturally into one or the other of our two basic categories—politicians and bureaucrats. While straining for a glimpse of the future, we should not mistake it for the present.

Precisely because most of the figures that we have tentatively classified as pure hybrids are still relatively rare in most countries, and are typically found in novel niches such as cabinet offices, ministerial *cabinets*, and legislative staffs, our own surveys of more conventionally defined senior civil servants and parliamentary politicians are not aptly designed to test the hypotheses embodied in Image IV.[72] Nevertheless, recognition of this hypothetical merger of the roles of bureaucrat and politician can sensitize us to possible convergences in the backgrounds, outlooks, and behavior of the groups we have surveyed.

We have carefully chosen to refer to four "images" of the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians, rather than "models" or "theories." We do *not* propose to "test" these images in any rigorous way, rejecting some and perhaps confirming one or another. Rather, we intend to use these four interpretations of the division of labor between politicians and bureaucrats as searchlights for illuminating empirical patterns in our data. Our basic question, to repeat, is this: in what ways are bureaucrats and politicians, as policymakers, similar and in what ways are they different?

We stress our interest in bureaucrats and politicians *as policymakers,* because each group also engages in activities that are only indirectly related to their joint concern with policy. Bureaucrats, for example, often have substantial responsibilities for managing the administrative machinery of government and for routine implementation of past decisions. They may spend much of their time letting contracts, hiring subordinates, redrawing organization charts, writing regulations, and so on. On the other hand, politicians spend much of their energies on electoral and party affairs—mending fences, mapping tactics, meeting the media, and so on. Despite the importance of such entries in the daily agendas of politicians and bureaucrats, these activities usually fall clearly into the province of one group or the other. We have chosen to concentrate instead on shared functions and "contested territory," that is, on those policymaking activities that involve both groups, at least potentially. We shall explore the more specialized or distinctive features of each role only insofar as those activities affect each group's policymaking behavior. We also emphasize that our respondents occupy senior positions in their national policymaking communities, for as we noted earlier, the appropriateness of one or another of the four images is quite likely to vary from level to level within the governmental apparatus. In general, we conjecture that Image I and perhaps Image II are particularly appropriate at lower levels in the government hierarchy, whereas Image III and perhaps Image IV are more accurate at higher levels.

Because our study design and to some extent our language here impose a formal dichotomy on the universe of government policymakers, it is important to clarify that we do *not* assume that the two sets of officials are internally homogeneous and externally competitive. We recognize, and our data confirm, that both bureaucrats and politicians are rather heterogeneous lots of individuals. This heterogeneity characterizes the sorts of variables that will be at the center of our analysis, such as political sensitivity and role conceptions, and it is also characteristic of the positions of these policymakers on concrete policy issues. Rare indeed are issues that pit politicians as a group against bureaucrats as a group. Much more common are alliances that cut across the two roles. We accept as generally true of modern government Ezra Suleiman's conclusion in the French case that policy outcomes reflect, not domination by civil servants, nor by politicians, but rather, shifting coalitions that include members of both groups.[73] Similarly, we do not assume that relations between bureaucrats and politicians are necessarily competitive and antagonistic. On the contrary, for some (though not all) of our countries, we could borrow the following description of relations between civil service and political elites in postwar Norway: "This relation has been characterized more by cooperation and a mutually satisfactory division of labor than by conflict and encroachment on one another's domain."[74]

In order to generalize about the comparison between bureaucrats and politicians in modern government, unobscured by national idiosyncracies or institutional peculiarities, it was essential that our analysis include a number of different countries. Some scholars, for example, have suggested that U.S. congressmen tend to be more parochial in orientation than federal executives, but it seems at least possible that this localism, rather than being endemic to the role of politician, might result instead from the extraordinarily decentralized American party system.[75] We felt that this possibility could be checked by including in our survey countries such as Britain, with its highly centralized party system.

Because our data cover several countries, they reveal many interesting cross-national differences among bureaucrats and among politicians. It would be tempting to explore these cross-national comparisons in some detail, for they often suggest fascinating insights into comparative politics and comparative administration. For reasons of time and space, however, we shall for the most part resist the temptation to wander down these byways, except insofar as they are directly relevant to our central concern: the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians.[76]

In that context one important contrast to keep in mind is that between the United States and Europe. Historically, sociologically, and constitutionally, European systems share more common traits than any of them does with the United States. We cannot here synthesize the voluminous literature on American exceptionalism. It will be useful, nonetheless, to review briefly some American peculiarities that bear on the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians.

Constitutionally, American government is usually described as embodying a "division of powers," but in practice, as Richard E. Neustadt has noted, American government is more accurately described as "separated institutions sharing powers [in other words, functions]."[77] The relatively clear division of labor between parliament and the executive that characterizes European governments is absent on this side of the Atlantic. In consequence, public authority here is institutionally fragmented and shared. Samuel Huntington has said, "America perpetuated [from the model of Tudor England] a fusion of functions and a division of power, while Europe developed a differentiation of functions and a centralization of power."[78]

Congress plays a more powerful and independent role in formulating policy and overseeing its implementation than do its sister legislatures in Europe. Whereas the legislative agenda of European parliaments is typically under the control of the government of the day, "half of the major legislation enacted by Congress in the last century has, in its entirety or in large part, been the result of congressional initiative and innovativeness."[79] Moreover, congressional oversight is substantially more detailed and effective than in Europe; indeed, it has been claimed that "many administrative officials now receive a good deal more day-to-day guidance from Congressmen than they get from the President."[80] The swollen staffs of Congress, occasionally the envy of European parliamentarians, are the natural concomitant of this expansive congressional role in national policymaking.

The American electoral and party systems are also distinctive. Single-member districts and party weakness require congressmen to articulate and respond to short-term demands and particularistic interests to a degree unusual among European legislators. Conversely, the less unified American parties have a weaker capacity than have the European parties to transform the articulation of demands into a coherent political force. Another result of congressional strength and party weakness is that the pattern of consultation that in Europe links interest groups and civil servants is expanded in the United States to include congressional committees, producing the famous (or infamous) "iron triangles" that are at the heart of policymaking and policy implementation in many functional sectors of American government.[81] Weak parties and shared responsibilities mean that "the American system of politics does not generate enough power at any focal point of leadership to provide the conditions for an even partially successful divorce of politics from administration."[82]

On the administrative side, the American bureaucracy lacks the predemocratic legitimacy that attaches to the monarchical, ex-monarchical, or Napoleonic bureaucracies of Europe. "Partly because they enjoyed a security of position that American bureaucracies lacked, and partly because of the conventions of the parliamentary system, executive agencies in European states have historically had less reason and less opportunity to engage in direct political activity of the sort that is common in the United States."[83] We have already noted one consequence of this contrast, namely, that the distinction between civil servants and political appointees is much more blurred in this country than in Europe. Moreover, American administrators have long had responsibility for promoting their policies and mobilizing their constituencies with an overtness and an intensity that is foreign to the European tradition. This practice, together with the weakness of American parties, has meant ironically that the U.S. bureaucracy has been recognized as a channel of representation rivaling Congress and, moreover, one that aggregates interests in a manner that is hardly less comprehensive or progressive.[84]

Thus, history has bequeathed to American policymakers a system that minimizes institutional distinctiveness and maximizes the propensity for officials throughout the system to share skills and outlooks across the formal boundary between politician and bureaucrat. The institutional division of labor is far less tidy in America than in Europe, and we should expect this contrast to be mirrored in our surveys of bureaucrats and politicians.[85]

Notes

1. Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 77–128.

2. See Robert D. Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976), pp. 173–190 and 205–208, for relevant evidence. As noted there, and as Weber had recognized, the United States does not fully fit this account. The characteristics of the U.S. political elite have been more stable over this century—partly because the capture of political power by middle-class party politicians occurred much earlier in this country, partly because American national parties never achieved the strength and unity of modern European parties. American peculiarities are discussed later in this chapter.

3. Eric Damgaard, "The Political Role of Nonpolitical Bureaucrats in Denmark," in *The Mandarins of Western Europe: The Political Role of Top Civil Servants*, ed. Mattei Dogan (New York: Halsted Press, 1975), p. 276; Morris P. Fiorina, *Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 93.

4. G. E. Aylmer, *The King's Servants: The Civil Service of Charles I, 1625–1642* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 10, as cited in Alfred Diamant, "The Bureaucratic Model: Max Weber Rejected, Rediscovered, Reformed," in *Papers in Comparative Public Administration*, ed. Ferrel Heady and Sybil L. Stokes (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Institute of Public Administration, 1963), p. 85.

5. On the central role of parties and bureaucracies in contemporary conceptions of political development, see Ferrel Heady, *Comparative Public Administration*, rev. 2nd ed. (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1979), pp. 79–126, and the vast literature cited there.

6. A useful overview of much of this literature is that of B. Guy Peters, *The Politics of Bureaucracy* (New York: Longman, 1978); for the U.S. case see Lewis C. Mainzer, *Political Bureaucracy* (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1973).

7. Woodrow Wilson, "The Study of Administration," *Political Science Quarterly*, 2 (June 1887): 209–210, as cited in Peters, *The Politics of Bureaucracy*, p. 4.

8. See Mainzer, *Political Bureaucracy*, p. 69.

9. Luther W. Gulick, "Notes on the Theory of Organization," in *Papers on the Science of Administration*, ed. Luther W. Gulick and Lyndall Urwick (New York: Columbia University, Institute of Public Administration, 1937), p. 10.

10. Heady, *Comparative Public Administration*, pp. 387–388; Samuel Krislov, *Representative Bureaucracy* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974), p. 288.

11. Peters, *The Politics of Bureaucracy*, pp. 137–138.

12. As cited in Diamant, "The Bureaucratic Model," p. 85.

13. For early statements of this point see Carl J. Friedrich, "Public Policy and the Nature of Administrative Responsibility," in *Public Policy*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich and E. S. Mason (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940); and Paul H. Appleby, *Policy and Administration* (University: University of Alabama Press, 1949).

14. Peter Shore, *Entitled to Know* (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1966), p. 153, as cited in Richard Rose, "The Variability of Party Government: A Theoretical and Empirical Critique," *Political Studies*, 17 (December 1969): 428.

15. As cited in Diamant, "The Bureaucratic Model," p. 80.

16. See Gerhard Loewenberg and Samuel C. Patterson, *Comparing Legislatures* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), pp. 142–143; Renate Mayntz and Fritz W. Scharpf, *Policy-making in the German Federal Bureaucracy* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1975), p. 67; and Rose, "The Variability of Party Government."

17. Francis E. Rourke, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Public Policy*, rev. ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1976), p. 184.

18. Because this question was put to politicians in Britain and Germany only, the figures in the text are limited to those two countries. However, there is no reason to believe that they are in any way unrepresentative.

19. Herbert A. Simon, *Administrative Behavior*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1957), pp. xii, 57–58, 197.

20. Fritz Morstein Marx, *The Administrative State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 41 and 25.

21. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1946), p. 105.

22. Glendon Schubert, *The Public Interest* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960).

23. Morstein Marx, *The Administrative State*, pp. 137–138.

24. See Putnam, *Comparative Study*, pp. 205–207.

25. Francis E. Rourke, ed., *Bureaucratic Power and National Politics* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965), p. 187.

26. Rourke, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Public Policy*, p. 75.

27. Pendleton Herring, *Public Administration and the Public Interest* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1936) as cited in Emmette S. Redford, *Democracy in the Administrative State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 189–190.

28. Norton E. Long, "Power and Administration," *Public Administration Review*, 9 (Autumn 1949): 257–264; Rourke, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Public Policy*, pp. 73–74.

29. Mayntz and Scharpf, *Policy-making*, p. 132.

30. James B. Christoph, "High Civil Servants and the Politics of Consensualism in Great Britain," in Dogan, *The Mandarins*, p. 47.

31. Richard Rose, *The Problem of Party Government* (New York: Free Press, 1974), pp. 418–419.

32. Colin Campbell and George J. Szablowski, *The Super-Bureaucrats: Structure and Behavior in Central Agencies* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1979), p. 201.

33. Christoph, "High Civil Servants," p. 29.

34. Mattei Dogan, "The Political Power of the Western Mandarins: Introduction," in Dogan, *The Mandarins*, p. 17; Roland Ruffieux, "The Political Influence of Senior Civil Servants in Switzerland," in *The Mandarins*, pp. 246–247; Vincent Wright, "Politics and Administration under the French Fifth Republic," *Political Studies* 22 (March 1974): 58; John Higley, Karl Erik Brofoss, and Knut Groholt, "Top Civil Servants and the National Budget in Norway," in *The Mandarins*, p. 262.

35. Mayntz and Scharpf, *Policy-making*, p. 136.

36. Samuel P. Huntington, "Congressional Responses to the Twentieth Century," in *The Congress and America's Future*, ed. David B. Truman (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 30.

37. Damgaard, "The Political Role of Nonpolitical Bureaucrats," p. 291.

38. The question was posed only in Britain; 36 percent of the MPs agreed without reservation, compared to 15 percent of the civil servants.

39. C. H. Sisson, *The Spirit of British Administration* (London: Faber, 1959), p. 23, as cited in Rose, *Party Government*, p. 423.

40. Morstein Marx, *The Administrative State*, p. 102.

41. As cited in Loewenberg and Patterson, *Comparing Legislatures*, p. 20.

42. Christoph, "High Civil Servants," p. 48.

43. Sisson, *Spirit*, p. 23, as cited in Rose, *Party Government*, pp. 423–424.

44. Mayntz and Scharpf, *Policy-making*, p. 71.

45. Rose, *Party Government*, p. 480.

46. Bruce W. Headey, "A Typology of Ministers: Implications for Minister–Civil Servant Relationships in Britain," in Dogan, *The Mandarins*, p. 83.

47. Mayntz and Scharpf, *Policy-making*, p. 74.

48. Ibid., p. 162.

49. Ibid., pp. 74–75, 153–157.

50. Mainzer, *Political Bureaucracy*, p. 115.

51. Rose, "The Variability of Party Government," p. 442.

52. See Samuel H. Beer, "Political Overload and Federalism," *Polity* 10 (Fall 1977): 5–17; and Gerhard Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government," *Comparative Political Studies* 10 (April 1977): 91–126.

53. Lehmbruch, "Liberal Corporatism," pp. 117–118, 122.

54. Cited in Dogan, *The Mandarins*, p. 20.

55. Mayntz and Scharpf, *Policy-making*, p. 92.

56. Dogan, *The Mandarins*, p. 20.

57. Rose, *Party Government*, p. 387.

58. Headey, "Typology of Ministers," p. 69.

59. Campbell and Szablowski, *The Super-Bureaucrats*, p. 78.

60. Alfred Diamant, "Tradition and Innovation in French Administration," *Comparative Political Studies* 1 (July 1968): 255.

61. Interestingly, the same phraseology has been used to describe trends in Germany (for example, Nevil Johnson, *Government in the Federal Republic of Germany* [Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1973], as cited in Dogan, *The Mandarins*, p. 15); France (for instance, Wright, "Politics and Administration"); and the United States (Hugh Heclo, *A Government of Strangers* [Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1977], pp. 65–76).

62. See Dogan, *The Mandarins*, pp. 14–15; Wright, "Politics and Administration," pp. 48–49; Jeanne Siwek-Pouydesseau, "French Ministerial Staffs," in *The Mandarins*, pp. 196–209; and Ezra Suleiman, *Politics, Power, and Bureaucracy in France: The Administrative Elite* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974).

63. See, for example, Heady, *Comparative Public Administration*, pp. 219–220.

64. See Rose, *Party Government*.

65. Mayntz and Scharpf, *Policy-making*, pp. 85–86.

66. Campbell and Szablowski, *The Super-Bureaucrats*.

67. For a fuller account of our Swedish findings, see Thomas J. Anton, *Administered Politics: Elite Political Culture in Sweden* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1980).

68. Heclo, *Government of Strangers*, pp. 34–36.

69. Ibid., p. 40.

70. Ibid., p. 82.

71. Loewenberg and Patterson, *Comparing Legislatures*, p. 164.

72. Naturally, some ministers and former ministers appear in our parliamentary samples, but in numbers too scant for us to generalize with any confidence.

73. Suleiman, *Politics, Power, and Bureaucracy*.

74. Higley, Brofoss, and Groholt, "Top Civil Servants," p. 252.

75. Huntington, "Congressional Responses."

76. For several methodological reasons involving problems of translation, sampling, and coding, we are less certain of the precision of our cross-national comparisons than of our cross-role comparisons. For example, on a question about the desirability of expanding popular participation in politics and government, we are somewhat more confident in the comparison between British politicians and British civil servants or between Italian politicians and Italian civil servants than we are in the comparison between British and Italian politicians or between British and Italian civil servants. This book focuses on the more reliable of the two types of comparison.

77. Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership* (New York: Wiley, 1960), p. 33.

78. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 110.

79. Loewenberg and Patterson, *Comparing Legislatures*, p. 142.

80. Charles Hyneman, *Bureaucracy in a Democracy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), as cited in Mainzer, *Political Bureaucracy*, pp. 76–77.

81. See, for example, J. Leiper Freeman, *The Political Process* (New York: Random House, 1955).

82. Norton E. Long, "Power and Administration," in *Bureaucractic Power*, ed. Francis E. Rourke, 2nd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1972), p. 7.

83. Rourke, *Bureaucracy, Politics and Public Policy*, pp. 73–74.

84. Norton E. Long, "Bureaucracy and Constitutionalism," *American Political Science Review*, 46 (September 1952): 808–818; and Rourke, *Bureaucracy, Politics, and Public Policy*, p. 154.

85. In some respects institutional analysis might lead us to expect the German Federal Republic to be more like the United States than are other European systems—that is, that distinctions between bureaucrats and politicians might be somewhat weaker there than elsewhere in Europe. Among the justifications for this speculation are (1) the more powerful and independent role of the Bundestag in national policymaking, and (2) the prominence of committed partisans in the upper reaches of the federal bureaucracy. On the former point, see Loewenberg and Patterson, *Comparing Legislatures*; on the latter, see Robert D. Putnam, "The Political Attitudes of Senior Civil Servants in Western Europe: A Preliminary Report," *British Journal of Political Science*, 3 (July 1973): 257–290; and Mayntz and Scharpf, *Policy-making*. Nevertheless, the main contrast we wish to stress is that between Europe and America.

Source: J. Aberbach, R. Putnam and B. Rockman, 'Introduction', *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1981, pp. 1–20.

2

Is there a radical approach to public administration?

Patrick Dunleavy

Public administration focuses pre-eminently on the institutions, organizational structures and decision/implementation processes of government. It is largely a 'formal' field, concerned with arrangements and procedures for making decisions, rather than with the substance or impacts of these decisions. It is also a relatively micro-level subject, often concerned with description rather than with macro-themes or large scale theorizing. Finally it is an area of study which is quite largely 'applied' and closely linked with practical problems and practiced solutions; it is or should be concerned with 'administration in the sense which is synonymous with organizing, managing or just "getting things done" (Pitt and Smith 1981,10).

But none of these characteristics justify the view held by many writers and administrators that public administration is a theory-less field of study or one which carries no connections with broader approaches to the study of society or to political theories and commitments. The existing literature is, as a matter of fact, strikingly homogenous in approach, with most writers being pluralists in their intellectual approach and small 'c' conservatives of varying hues in their political views. But this rather cosy picture has already come under sustained attack by theorists of the 'new right', deriving their inspiration from public choice theory and mounting a root and branch critique of mainstream views of the nature of bureaucracy, sound administrative principles, the role of local government, and the operations of legislatures (Ostrom and Ostrom 1971). They perceive an 'intellectual crisis' in mainstream public administration, stemming from a damaging and limiting set of assumptions which have prevented writers in the field from thinking critically about the 'deep structure' of their approach. This critique has a great deal of force, even if the new right literature itself is largely vitiated by arbitrary assumptions and incoherent reasoning. (Niskanen 1971; Auster and Silver 1979; Tiebout 1957).

My purpose in this paper is to consider whether there is any body of work at all comparable to 'new right' work, but formulated from a radical perspective. Is there a radical approach to public administration, one which offers a decent set of insights into the field of conventional topics and defines a distinct theoretical perspective from which further work could be undertaken? I take it that the mainstream answer to this question is implicitly negative, since possible radical approaches are mentioned hardly at all in the literature. But since the mainstream literature also conspicuously ignores the well-developed new right view (despite it's having been articulated now for at least ten years and despite its coverage of virtually all significant areas of the field), I also take it that the mainstream verdict cannot be accepted without further inspection.

What sort of approach might count as 'radical', either in intellectual terms or in terms of practical politics? One obvious answer might seem to be orthodox Marxism and political movements which adopt Marxist theory as their central ideological pillar, such as communist parties. In fact I shall barely mention such approaches in what follows. Orthodox Marxism is grounded in labour theory of value economics and historical materialism. It says next to nothing of significance about the internal organization of government, tending indeed to adopt a monolithic view of the 'capitalist state' as an undifferentiated social actor (but see also Therborn 1978). And communist party approaches to practical public administration are distinguished chiefly by a stifling and unthinking conservatism. Whilst they officially espouse variants of the Leninist doctrine that public administration can be handed over directly to ordinary workers to run (Wright 1978, ch.4) all communist regimes (with the possible partial exception of Yugoslavia) in practice operate a nakedly technocratic form of government (Lindblom 1977, pt.IV). The only innovation in communist states' organization of public administration is their subordination of government organs at every level of the state to a vast, authoritarian counter-bureaucracy in the form of the Communist party. I take it as axiomatic that whilst such systems may be worth studying for their intrinsic interest (particularly as exemplars of the pathological growth of bureaucracy), they offer no possibility of insights into the operations of public administration in a liberal democracy or into its development in forms consistent with increasing popular control of government.

Instead I define radical approaches in terms of broadly socialist theories and parties (or party sections) which fully accept the value of liberal democracy and seek to develop it only in ways which are consistent with free elections, free speech, and the preservation and extention of civil liberties. In theoretical terms the main bodies of thought involved are some forms of unorthodox, democratized neo-Marxism and radical forms of social and political thought derived from the work of Max Weber. Both these differ from orthodox Marxism in accepting that the political system needs to be explained in terms of its own dynamics, and not simply reduced to pre-determined consequences of changes in the economic 'base' of society. In terms of practical politics, a radical approach to public administration might be linked with left socialist parties or groupings in larger social democratic parties, chiefly the Partie Socialiste in France, the centre to left sections of the British Labour party, left social democrats in West Germany and Scandinavia, and possibly the most liberal wing of the still Eurocommunist Italian Communist party.

Assessing the usefulness of a radical approach to public administration involves looking at the basic characteristics or themes in such an approach;

at those areas where the perspective has been applied to concrete institutional analysis; and finally at the contribution which such an approach might make to the future development of public administration.

New Themes in Public Administration

The essential problems which have promoted the emergence of a radical perspective on public administration are the post-war growth of the public sector into the 'extended state' found in most advanced industrialized countries, and the apparent major hiatus or possible turning point currently evident in this growth process. The radical toolkit for handling these problems has five main components.

Firstly, the radical approach is highly sceptical of explanations of these developments phrased in terms of the conscious motives and actions of particular individuals, especially the 'face value' interpretations which still predominate in much conventional public administration. Radical writers adopt a number of different positions in explaining why academic analysis must seek to penetrate behind administrative actors' subjective views of the processes within which they are enmeshed. At one end of the spectrum are structuralist writers who seek to exclude all mention of individual actors from the explanans in constructing an explanation, relating change instead to the dynamic unfolding of constant 'systems of transformation' built into the essential structure of the administrative system at any point in time (Piaget 1971; Poulantzas 1973). At the other end of the spectrum are views which emphasize only that administrators and organizations may act freely and consciously, but always within parameters which they cannot themselves re-define. From issue to issue the logic of the situation will vary greatly in the extent to which it constrains or induces people to act in particular ways (Lukes 1977; Connolly 1981).

Secondly, radical approaches make a sustained attempt to understand changes in public administration in terms of their integral connections with broad social conflicts, especially those between social or occupational classes or major functional groups (such as business and labour). They thus deny both that administrative changes and arrangements are normally neutral as between social groups, and that administrative change responds largely to an internal organizational logic. Instead, by seeking to decode public sector organization as a response to and an element in social conflict, the radical approach insists that the social consequences of government procedures are not accidental by-products but integral elements in administrative change (Offe 1972, 1974; Habermas 1976; Littlejohn, Smart, Wakeford and Yural-Davis 1978). This form of explanation can easily become a blunt instrument in which any and every organizational innovation emerges as the device of a dominant group, elite or class for perpetuating its predominance. And it is common to find this pattern of explanation being used in undifferentiated ways, so that social groups' interests are not spelt out or justified, nor are the subtleties of social impacts of administration matched by the articulation of the explanation. Nonetheless, given the bogus neutralism and the narrowly political concerns of mainstream explanations, it is a contribution of the first importance to insist that, say, the 1974 local government reorganization disadvantaged the working class, and was indeed intended (even if almost sublimally intended) to do so (Dearlove 1979; Benington 1976). Similarly, the impact of the cash limits system of public expenditure control introduced into British government in 1976 has definite (even if mediated) implications for consumers of public services, public sector workers and the state dependent population (Conference of Socialist Economists 1979). To insist that such impacts be explicitly incorporated into explanations of this change is also to insist on an intellectual honesty which mainstream writers have commonly found discomforting and tried to avoid.

Thirdly, the radical approach to public administration emphasizes non-evolutionary processes of organizational development. In place of the gradualistic models and consensual assumptions of mainstream approaches, the radical approach accords a central role to crises in bringing about changes. By 'crisis' is meant not a point of collapse (a common misconception amongst mainstream writers who see the radical approach as predicting nothing but the failure of existing institutions). Rather a crisis is a turning point, for example, the stage of an illness where a patient's condition *either* degenerates quickly *or* recovers towards normality and the transcendence of the original illness. Crises are periods of concentrated change, change which is to a great extent forced on actors whether they wish it or not, a period of seriously narrowed choice parameters, but where the right choice results in a shift into a renewed period of relative stability (Habermas 1976; Clegg 1980). Administrative crises are often interpreted as reflections of social conflicts. That crises are fairly frequent in liberal democracies is seen as indicative of quite high levels of social conflict in such societies. Because conflict is endemic, most crisis management takes the form of displacing tensions and problems from one part of the political and administrative system to another, a process which may cause new crises to occur after substantial time lags, in unpredictable places and in hard-to-interpret forms. In this view quite small-seeming problems may indicate a background of much more fundamental and irreconcilable conflict; for example, the apparently trivial social problem of securing effective public participation in highly technical or professionalized fields of administration remains virtually undented despite decades of liberal rhetoric and a whole sequence of participatory nostrums and techniques (Offe 1975). Above all, the radical approach emphasizes that displacing crises always produces problems at some other point in the social system; we cannot necessarily seek the origins of administrative crises within the administrative system alone, nor assess solutions to such crises solely in terms of administrative impacts. None of this in any way denies the possibility of progress, of some genuine level of crisis resolution implying a move to a higher level of performance. What is essential is that the process is discontinuous, focused into short periods of seriously constrained choice and of major change, and always partial, creating new problems even as the old problems are apparently buried without trace.

Fourthly, the radical approach reintroduces into public administration the notion of functional explanation (previously associated mainly with systems analysis). Instead of looking only at administrative processes in terms of the casual mechanisms, functional explanations ask what their function is within the broader social and political system. For this sort of orientation to be explanatory rather than simply descriptive (i.e. in order to say that a result happened *because* it was functional), it is essential either to show that detailed mechanisms exist which produce a functional result, or at least to show that although the mechanisms involved cannot be specified, nonetheless a functional result always occurs in similar situations (Cohen 1980; Elster 1980). Functional explanation is the key link which the radical approach makes between the three points set out above. Individualistic explanations can be by-passed primarily because of this mode of argument. Administrative changes can be connected with social conflict mainly within such a pattern of explanation. And lastly, crises themselves can easily be identified when a functionalist account is involved. This is not to claim either that the radical approach can dispense with causal explanation, or that it has solved the intractable philosophical problems of showing how functional and causal explanations link together. But a start has been made in analyzing the functions of state activity anew, primarily in terms of a distinction between activities which further economic development (measured by profit and investment levels), and activities which further social integration.

Fifthly, the radical approach promotes popular participation in decision-making into central prominence as a value which should inform administrative arrangements. This emphasis is not just a refusal to accept the by now commonplace 'revisionist' notion of democracy (Duncan and Lukes 1963) in which popular preferences are fulfilled without significant mass participation. Radical writers, of course, emphasize the inherent value to be placed on opportunities for autonomous decision making. But this is not simply an echo of John Stuart Mill in his more thoroughgoing liberal moments (see Wolff 1968). Rather, control over the decisions affecting one's future is important for radical writers because of even more basic considerations. Jurgen Habermas (1979) distinguishes between two fundamental types of human activity, labour and interaction. Labour consists of all the instrumental productive activities which allow human societies to exist and develop. And interaction encompasses all the communicative actions which hold such a society together and give it meaning. Habermas argues that an analysis of communication reveals that 'pure' communication could only take place in conditions where there is a fundamental equality between the participants involved (see Held 1981). Power differentials, therefore, necessarily produce 'systematically distorted communication' in which common meanings or truth values disappear. Technocratic government emerges on this view not just as objectionable in terms of the theory of representative government, but as a form of social arrangements which negates fundamentally human qualities and inevitably induces a loss of common purposes or reference points in society (Habermas 1971, chs. 5 and 6). Social arrangements become impenetrable, not just for the mass of the population who are governed for, but also for the governing elite. In a technocratic society administrative structures and practices cannot facilitate the attainment of common purposes. Instead they emerge as insuperable barriers to understanding or progress, imposing themselves as external forces even on those who created them.

Applications of the radical approach

Turning to the concrete application of a radical approach to the analysis of administrative questions, a preliminary problem worth mentioning is that it is rarely presented in an isolated form. It is usual to find this approach to administration embedded in broader studies of state activity, often studies undertaken with an explicit policy focus. So to some extent any attempt to summarize only those propositions with a direct bearing on administration must distort the original literature. Nonetheless it is worth briefly reviewing the kind of insights which the radical approach has generated about three topics — the organization of government in liberal democracies, budgeting, and the professionalization of government.

Government organization is an area of public administration where mainstream writers tend to write *within* particular institutional categories, which they rarely analyze. Hence they produce books about central government, about public corporations or about local government, which take the existence and the scope of functions of such institutions to be unproblematic. In contrast the radical approach defines its subject matter as 'the state' as a whole. Hence it promotes questions about the distribution of government functions between different types of state institutions into central prominence. In particular the radical approach seeks to understand why the distribution of functions between different levels of government changes over time and varies from one country to another. To a great extent answers to these questions determine also how the radical approach interprets more traditional mainstream issues and controversies, such as arguments about the centralization of control powers at a national level, or about the predominance of different types of actors in central executive decision-making.

The essential radical argument about government organization is that it forms a structure which systematically promotes some kinds of solutions to social problems over others, and hence also promotes some kinds of social interests over others. Given that private market processes of economic development underpin state finances and critically determine the level of income and employment in liberal democracies, government organization reflects the primacy of functions which promote such development and protect business interests. The 'dual state thesis', for example, postulates a dichotomy in state functions between those which foster economic development via improving company profits directly, and those which primarily serve to improve living standards and have only an indirect effect on levels of economic development (O'Connor 1973; Saunders 1981, 258-78). The first type of 'social investment' functions will be organized at the regional or national levels of government; they will be run directly by the central bureaucracy or by quasi-governmental, appointed agencies; they will emphasize planning and the setting of government policy by a corporatist process of the government negotiating solutions with major production interest groups in return for their co-operation; inputs from representative political processes into this sort of area will be rather remote and indirect. In contrast 'social consumption' functions will be organized at the local government level with some measure of local autonomy; because of their closeness to the 'grass roots' these services will attract popular participation and be quite closely controlled by representative political institutions, operating in a basically pluralist way (Cawson and Saunders 1981; MacKay 1981; Clegg 1982). Variants of this approach lay less stress on the central-local dimension; e.g. the 'dual local state' view argues that local authorities will continue to have economic development functions, but that these will tend to be run by quasi-governmental local agencies and be difficult to control politically (Friedland, Piven and Alford 1977). The radical approach also argues that the scale and character of local government activities will be shaped by area structures which have either been deliberately modernized and enlarged to discourage additional spending (as in contemporary British local government), or fragmented so far that many local issues, especially those involving redistribution between social groups, cannot be raised at all (as in the USA).

In terms of coping with the contemporary operations of the whole public sector the radical approach seems to offer considerable improvements on mainstream views. It is sceptical about the over-concentration of mainstream views on central government, pointing out that Whitehall departments retain operational control of very few areas of government policy; two thirds of UK civil servants deal with just three functions: tax collection, administering personal transfer payments, and defence. Traditional preoccupations, such as the balance of ministerial and civil service 'power' in their personal interactions, must be radically re-interpreted when government departments are no longer line bureaucracies with directly administered activities, but rather money-moving 'staff' agencies enmeshed in complex systems of inter-organizational relations. And the concept of 'the state' as the over-arching unity underlying this complexity provides the radical approach with a key starting point for this exercise.

Budgeting emerges as the key co-ordination mechanism in the radical account of how integration is achieved between one area of state activity and another. Following on from the key work in this field, James O'Connor's *The Fiscal Crisis of the State* (1973), the radical approach seeks to create a new kind of budgetary analysis which O'Connor termed 'fiscal sociology'. Fiscal sociology breaks more or less completely with the approach practiced in conventional public finance of analyzing budgetary decision-making in isolation from the concrete groups and interests promoting expenditures or deriving benefits from particular budgetary decisions. Instead these relationships are taken as central to any explanation, and the budget is treated as a summary measure of the balance of state policy as between social classes and groups. This requires a measure of attention to the output aspects of budgets (rather than their inputs) which has actually not yet been forthcoming despite O'Connor's tempting prospectus. Rather against the initial idea in the field, exponents of the radical approach have spent a long time seeking to fit changes in the organizational arrangements of budgeting (PPBS in the early 1970s and cash limits in the later part of the decade) into their explanations. These efforts have been only fairly plausible, not least because of the ability to explain very different changes (such as PPBS and cash limits) in terms of the same general process of centralization of executive power within central government. Since the evidence for this process remains very partial (and radical writers are often driven to ad hoc expedients such as citing conservative critics of PPBS to make their points) this has been an unhappy development.

Nonetheless, the basic interest of a radical view of budgeting, and its potential for further development, remain considerable, as perhaps one small example may demonstrate. The attempt by the 1979 Conservative Government in Britain to squash once and for all the power of local authorities to finance extra local spending from their rates poses an interesting problem for mainstream approaches (Martlew 1981). This problem has a longish history, reflecting the persistent failure of the Treasury since the 1920s to remove local authorities' ability to commit extra central government grant by 'overspending' central government limits. If public expenditure limitation has been necessary for reasons of macro-economic management, why has the Treasury not simply placed a limit on its contribution and thereby prevented local government spending from affecting the public sector borrowing requirement? For the radical approach the answer seems clear cut: central government has deliberately maintained its involvement in local 'overspending' in order to retain a plausible excuse for interfering in council revenue budgeting. In a most interesting analysis, Martlew demonstrates that this stance has been maintained at every reorganization of local government finance by the Treasury in this century. When block grant and rate support grant arrangements have been rejigged, central involvement has been maintained even in 'overspend' budgeting, with the apparent intention of securing a lever with which to keep down rates on business property. Mr. Heseltine's series of abortive attempts between 1979 and 1982 to involve the DoE in making budget decisions for individual local authorities is a radical break with the mechanisms previously operated. But on this view, it only makes transparent a much longer running continuity in central policy makers' concerns.

Professionalization forms another important area where the radical approach has been developed in clear contrast with mainstream accounts. The anti-technocratic strand in radical thinking feeds through into a profound scepticism about the validity or utility of systems of public service delivery where policy control is concentrated in the hands of professional groups. The radical approach adopts a fundamentally critical attitude towards professional ideologies' altruisitic or 'public interest' orientation, preferring to assess such claims by looking at the concrete impacts of professional control (Johnson 1972; Larson 1977). A relatively familiar first claim is that professionals almost always act instrumentally to secure an organization of the public services which advances their interests as against those of client groups or the public at large (Wilding 1982). More original arguments then explore less obvious implications of professional control. Radical writers have sought to document the *de facto* dependence of professions on business patronage underlying the facade of professional independence in many areas. Some of these carry public policy implications where the profession may function to channel business influence into government, e.g. in nuclear power development in Britain and the USA (Dunleavy 1982). Other authors have tried to unravel the impact of concentrations of professional control on service recipients using the extremely suggestive 'disabling profession' argument developed by Illich (1975, 1977). This essentially claims that in many areas of professional control over policy making, such as doctors' ability to define the content of medical practice, or teachers' control over learning, the provision of pre-packaged services in a form which can be 'sold' to governments is often self-defeating. The professions will almost always reduce people's autonomous capabilities for health care or learning faster than they replace these capabilities with their own commodified solutions. So that for the radical approach, chronic features of state service provision which remain largely unexplained in conventional approaches (such as the virtual neglect of preventative medicine) emerge as anomalies inherent in a professionalized form of administration.

In each of the three areas of applied analysis reviewed here it is possible to find a distinctive slant on public administration being put forward by the radical approach. But it is less easy to be sanguine about the current lack of an integrated approach across these different topics. A great deal of work remains to be done in pulling together the various themes of the radical approach across the whole field of public administration, rather than leaving as they stand a collection of insights made in more general works.

Evaluating the radical approach

What sort of contribution is the radical approach likely to make to the future development of public administration, either in intellectual or practical terms? Should we take it seriously as a new contender for critical attention or practitioner scrutiny? My conclusion on both counts would be positive. In intellectual terms, the radical approach is sufficiently coherent to merit inclusion in courses and research investigations, not only as a critique of mainstream approaches but as an emergent and original perspective in its own right. The most important constraint here is likely to be the absence of any book-length exposition of the approach as a whole, and indeed a general shortage of works which deal primarily with administrative issues, rather than with much broader social and political themes. But despite the current difficulty in tracking down and bringing together the insights of radical writers discussed here, the effort pays useful dividends in broadening the sweep of questions considered in public administration. And by raising new points of controversy and debate, the radical approach demonstrates yet again that no conventional wisdom has a monopoly of truth and that the accumulation of puzzles and paradoxes in any dominant paradigm of explanation can only be assessed against the background of possible replacement paradigms.

In practical terms the radical approach also has something to offer, both to those democratic socialists whom the approach seeks to address directly, and to administrators in general. No student of public administration looking back over the post-war experience of liberal democracies can be happy about the very restricted range of solutions to administrative problems which have been put into practice. The contemporary politics of most

Western countries provides ample evidence that popular demands for participation and control over public policy making remain substantially unfulfilled on issues of central salience for future social conditions, such as the development of civilian nuclear power projects. The radical approach offers at least a basis from which new solutions to administrative problems could begin to be defined. This is not to say that the practical solutions canvassed by radical writers at present match this prospectus. But the resurgence of socialist politics in Western Europe in the early 1980s offers some chance that the current rather elementary prescriptions for democratizing practical public administration may be rethought in closer relation to the radical approach's theories, and tested in some depth at local and national government levels.

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3

Senior public servants and the crisis of the late capitalist state

Michael Pusey

The last decade has produced a rich sociological literature on what is variously explained as the 'post-industrial', 'late-capitalist', or 'corporatist' state. Isn't it, therefore, somewhat surprising that a concern with the crisis of the state should not have followed its own implications and, at least, inquired into the possibility of a crisis among those people who *are* the state once it is conceived as a social actor, i.e. its higher bureaucrats?

It is clear that we could not with equanimity contemplate a situation in which any substantial proportion of the 'captains of industry' (and of commerce and finance) found themselves inwardly paralysed, frustrated or disoriented. Their commitments, their uncertainties and expectations, 'their morale' and their ideologies, are researched by legions of people who have no difficulty in persuading other academics or the public of the economic and social significance of their findings. All this should serve to remind us that, by contrast, no one seems especially interested in (higher) public servants, in whether or not they succeed in what they do or in their motivation and commitment.

I focus specifically on higher public servants because it is this top one per cent of officials who are most active in creating, maintaining and elaborating the structures that will regulate what is done by all the others : in this sense their creativity is functionally indispensable. Yet even the most superficial reflection offers many good prima facie reasons for one to expect some kinds of crisis of motivation and commitment in the higher echelons of the public service of these English speaking advanced capitalist societies.[1] These officials are paid far less than executives with comparable responsibilities[2] in the private sector and they are much better educated[3] than the politicians who assail them with accusations of 'waste and inefficiency' and with demands for more accountability and better service with fewer resources. There are surely good prima facie reasons to suppose that senior public servants must be facing increasing pressures and diminishing rewards. These strains must also be accentuated by a widened ideological divergence between the committed centrism of most senior bureaucrats and the militant conservatism of many of their new political masters[4] as well as by the diminishing opportunities for experience and advancement which must follow the sudden restraint of what has been described as the one permanent growth industry of the modern world—i.e. the state.[5]

The main purpose of this paper is to argue that the vocational commitment or the motivation of higher public servants should be treated not as an uninteresting 'imponderable' but rather as an important topic for critical *sociological* research. The paper is in three parts. The first part seeks to lift the ideological veil enough at least to identify the bias in prevailing misperceptions of higher public servants in advanced capitalist societies. Part two of the paper sets the situation of higher public servants against the Offe/Habermas model of the crisis of the state. The third section of the paper considers how the crisis of the state impinges on the performance of higher public servants.

Part 1

Why is our problem so far off the social science research agenda? In this first section I want to suggest that this want of interest is partly a consequence of paradigmatic assumptions in those research traditions which have so thoroughly dominated the prevailing views of public administration which are held among academics, the educated public, politicians, the business elite and, perhaps most importantly, among public administrators themselves. It seems obvious that paradigmatic assumptions which are firmly held and directly applied to the legitimation, design, and maintenance of such key institutions as the ministries of state, must have a strong and direct impact on the people who staff them.

What are these paradigmatic assumptions and where do they originate?

From classical liberalism

In the 'developed' English-speaking world, studies of the state, and hence also of its workers, have traditionally reflected the assumptions of the great British empiricists and later utilitarians from Hobbes, Locke and Hume to J. S. Mill.

My purpose here is neither to explain nor to trivialise this rich tradition but only to recall the manner in which its basic assumptions have coloured—and prejudiced?—our prevailing image of the public servant. Of course, in the original writings practically nothing is said about administrators *per se* because they were then not numerous and were seen only as the clerks of politicians and of the parliament, as menial helpers and virtual nonentities.

Our view of them is coloured from the outset by the subordinate and almost negative role which is given to the state and to politics. At worst the state is a necessary evil, at best it provides security and the enabling conditions for the pursuit of private enterprise and private enjoyment. Hobbes thought that politics was in itself an unproductive and unpleasant activity and that people would always lose interest in it as soon as security was assured. Nor can the state or its administrators claim any kind of reason as a warrant for their existence or their action since there is no transcending reason beyond the actual interests and situations of individuals who co-operate for reasons which are strictly pragmatic. The state is ultimately a matter of convenience for the individual citizen who has primacy over it because he or she creates it by convention or compact with others. Citizens can be enterprising and intellectually and spiritually creative—the state cannot. And so nor then can its administrators. This tradition, which is the most potent source of our definitions and understandings of the state and its administrators, has fixed the criteria by which we assess the work of public servants in a way which, a priori, excludes any kind of real intellectual, spiritual or social creativity. Creative work is always private and so public administration must be seen and judged on the secondary criteria of reliability, obedience, and efficiency. It is this underlying but dominant perspective which plays such a large part in blocking any adequate recognition of public servants as acting subjects with the same complex mixture of intellectual, ethical, and aesthetic capacities and strivings as anyone else coming from the same kind of background as they typically do—i.e. middle class families with a history of involvement in public affairs.[6] These blinkers prevent us from thinking seriously about the value commitments of public servants. More precisely, they deny or *obscure any kind of coherent* relationship between social identity and public work. Public administrators are therefore a special class of people who are amoral and so immune to demoralisation. This is implicit in the writings of leading contemporary liberal social theorists such as Lipset, Daniel Bell, Moynihan and Walzer.

Michael Walzer, who is the most critical and reformist of these writers, searches with them for the source of all that is good and potentially redemptive in Western democracies in the warming sense of civility which is the only kind of communality to which he and they admit. But, with respect to the administrators involved in the building of the welfare state, he takes a view which is probably characteristic of most liberals:

> While the building of the welfare state will have its exciting and morally significant moments, its administration will not. Its administrators will rarely feel themselves buoyed up and sustained by the zeal of their clients. The pride they may well take in the material services they render will rarely be elevated by the inner conviction of a higher purpose.[7]

Private citizens are the only source of ideals, warmth and energy. The Liberal tradition only allows us to hope that our elected politicians will give 'energy and direction'[8] to the state. Since our public servants cannot be socially, culturally, morally, or even intellectually creative, at best they contribute only equilibrium and 'directionless consensus.'[9]

From orthodox Marxism

There is some irony in the fact that the mainstream Marxist opponents to Liberalism have another very similar kind of paradigmatic blindness towards public administration. In most of the Marxist literature there is no clear differentiation between elected politicians and public administrators. By lumping the two together it is implicitly and wrongly assumed that the behaviour of public servants is a mere reflex of the legislature and judiciary of capitalist society.

Frankel explains persuasively how and why the Marxist orthodoxy ignores the structure and the internal contradictions of the modern state. Such influential Marxists as Baran and Sweezy, Mandel, and Braverman typically view the state apparatus as part of a superstructure which is entirely epiphenomenal to economic relations of exchange between capital and workers. As Frankel explains, for these orthodox writers:

> . . . the relationships between capital and labour are *the* focal points of class analysis while state apparatuses are conceived in an instrumental and *passive* manner as virtual *by-products* of this *external* class struggle.[10]

It is true that the argument between Miliband and Poulantzas over 'the relative autonomy of the state' did temporarily challenge the purely instrumentalist view of the state. However, although Poulantzas recognises internal contradictions *within* the structures and policies of the state, he then insists, in a way which is characteristic of another modern Marxist orthodoxy, that such contradictions must be analysed and understood very strictly as *class* conflicts.

> The State is a condensation of a relationship of forces between classes and class fractions, such as these express themselves, in a necessarily specific form, *within the State* itself. In other words the State is through and through constituted—divided by class contradictions.[11]

The effect of this second emphasis, which comes as much from Althusser as from Poulantzas, has been to focus attention on the structural characteristics of advanced capitalist societies. In this structuralist Marxism the state has no relative autonomy, the state workers are still 'the servants of power', and the conflicts and crises to which they may be prone are of no interest in themselves and should more properly be seen as 'surface manifestations' of contradictions between class positions and fractions of capital. Nor would there be much purpose in inquiring further, within this paradigm, into the reasons and motives of action of public administrators—i.e. into their symbolic constructions of their own situation. All their understandings would have to be explained as an ideology which is 'inscribed' into them in such a way as to foreclose all useful inquiry into whatever uncertainties and contradictions might exist *in their minds*. Such questions have no interest because their understanding is already ideologically bound by the structures, and attempts to distinguish between ideology and reality are foredoomed to failure. The social scientist should more usefully examine the structural basis of the ideology *per se* as well as its role in the reproduction of capital. Public administrators are lesser creatures who are of interest only in as much as they vicariously exercise and wield the power of their masters or else only as people with a second hand experience of a class struggle which is carried on by those other *real* workers who must sell their labour power to the capitalists.

From Weber

Weber's classical description of the characteristics of bureaucratic organisation—hierarchy of offices, universalistic rules, written records, dispassionate impersonality of conduct, appointment by merit on formal qualifications, tenure, security, and no outside interests, etc.—were enshrined in the post World War Two organisation theory and public administration literature as a kind of normative canon for the design and conduct of administration. Although Weber himself would have been horrified to find himself read in this way it is easy to see why his chapter on the characteristics of bureaucracy was taken out of context and normalised. Weber was basically a liberal and hence acceptable to Establishment opinion. Moreover, other parts of his work could be read, especially in America, as a grand apology for the Protestant Mission. He could be justly seen as a fine scientist and his impeccable scholarship and high-mindedness could then be used to dignify and legitimate the study of *public* administration and thus to distinguish it from the mechanical and vulgar nostrums of Taylorism and Scientific Management.

Yet, Weber's vast influence has played its own decisive part in creating a negative image of the public service. In the first place Weber has encouraged a whole generation of intellectuals on both the right and the left to see administration as 'The Iron Cage', as the deadly enemy of democratic politics, as the 'animated machine' and as the only 'really inescapable power'[12] which is everywhere 'busy fabricating the shell of bondage which men will perhaps be forced to inhabit some day as powerless as the fellahs of ancient Egypt'. This view of bureaucracy as an omnipotent and implacable mechanism does little to promote credible interest in its fragility or the possibility of its internal failure!

But what of the more specific Weberian influences on social science studies of higher administrators? We shall find here too the same double stigmatisation of the senior bureaucrat who is simultaneously depicted as someone who is, on the one hand, a dangerous threat to the rightful prerogatives of ministers and politicians—because he is too efficient!—and, on the other hand as a lesser creature without creativity or real moral stature. Weber's promptings are quite unambiguous. As examples of the first side of this negative image we read that:

> Wherever the modern specialised official comes to predominate his power proves practically indestructible since the whole organisation of even the most elementary want satisfaction has been tailored to his mode of operation.[13]

and, further, that:

> Under normal conditions, the power position of a fully developed bureaucracy is always overtowering. The 'political master' finds himself in the position of a 'dilettante' . . . facing the trained official who stands within the management of administration.[14]

As an example of the second side of this description we read Weber's comparison between the government minister who is 'supposed to be' and 'indeed is' something very different from the 'official' because:

> If a man in a leading position is an 'official' in the spirit of his performance, no matter how qualified—a man that is who works dutifully and honourably according to rules and instruction—then he is as useless at the helm of a private enterprise as of a government.[15]

The bureaucrat has a categorically different kind of responsibility. Once a senior bureaucrat has received a directive:

> It is his duty and even his honour to carry it out as if it corresponded to his innermost conviction, and to demonstrate in this fashion that his sense of duty stands above his personal preference . . . This is the ethos of *office*. A political leader acting in this way would deserve contempt.[16]

Both the politician and the scientist can and should follow a vocation which draws moral edification and direction from underlying value-rational (*wertrational*) commitments: not so the senior administrator who has no ennobling virtue beyond his/her obedience.

As the mainstream research has followed these classical nostrums it has perpetuated the stigma of the higher administrator as the soulless engine of technical rationalisation and at the same time, and perhaps much more significantly, it has ruled out any consideration of their susceptibility to any kind of cultural crisis. They either have no value-commitments or cultural orientations at all or else these have been so effectively neutralised as to render them irrelevant to their practice as administrators. In either case they are immune to crises in the cultures which are inhabited by the larger population of normal human beings.

From empiricist psychology

There is at least one more set of assumptions which block a *sociological* view of the motivations and commitments of public servants.

The problem here is that most research into motivation has been firmly dominated by empiricist psychologists. It is true that the phenomenological and humanist psychology of Maslow and Rogers had a strong influence on the modern 'human relations' school of organisation theory (i.e. Magregor, Bennis, Argyris, and Likert) in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It is also true that the neo-Freudian ego-psychology of Sullivan, Horney, and especially Erikson have had some part in shaping prevailing notions about motivation and work; so too has the developmental psychology of Piaget and Kohlberg's theories of moral development. But with this said the fact remains that the normal parameters of research and discussion of human motivation are the result of a psychological reduction which paradigmatically excludes any consideration of the cultural and social bases of human action. Indeed David McClelland, the highly influential author of the concept of 'achievement motivation', seeks, in a characteristically empiricist way, to prove that motivation is *not* a cultural phenomenon. In short the dominant paradigm—psychological and strongly empiricist—sustains the common view that motivation is a function of each individual's own bundle of psychological traits, drives, and other endowments. On this view our motivations therefore have no direct relationship with the shared knowledge, understanding and meaning which we commonly call culture. Since motivation is not a product of social and cultural inheritance it is not directly subject to social dislocation or cultural contraditions. It is something which the individual *per se* brings to a particular job . . . and if he/she doesn't then someone else will!

Part 2

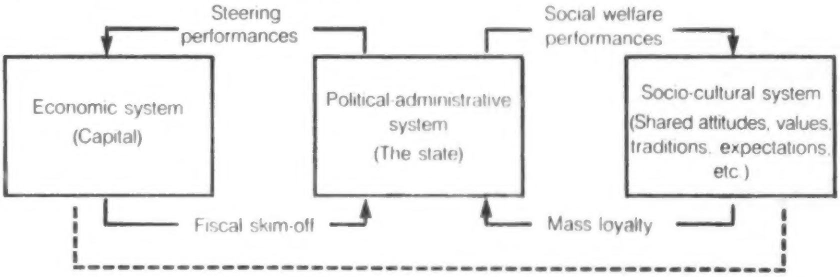
So far I have argued only that our prevailing views of public servants are blinkered in a way which makes it unlikely that we would recognise any crisis of motivation and commitment until it had actually forced its recognition upon us *post factum*.

However the central contention remains that public servants are eminently vulnerable to such a crisis and that this is best understood in terms of a sociological theory of the state in advanced capitalist society. A full treatment of the literature on the crisis of the state is both beyond the scope of this paper and available elsewhere.[17] Since the Offe and Habermas'[18] statement of the problem is the most comprehensive I would like to outline some of its basic features as a background for my arguments.

Offe's classical description of the (late) *capitalist* state is as follows. The capitalist state must obey the three cardinal conditions of its existence, '*exclusion*, *maintenance* and *dependency*'. The first distinctive characteristic of the capitalist society is that it has a 'private enterprise' economy from which the state is *excluded*. It must not usurp the 'natural' role of private enterprise which is to produce goods and services for profit—government statutory bodies that run airlines, telecommunications, and banks are merely the exceptions which prove the general rule. *Maintenance*, the second condition, means that the state *must* maintain favourable conditions for private enterprise and capital accumulation by producing appropriate legal, fiscal, and other structures together with the necessary infrastructures (examples would be laws to regulate taxation, tariff and labour, energy production—public electricity for private aluminium smelters!—communications in the form of roads, airports, telecommunications, etc.) The third and obvious condition is that the capitalist state, excluded as it is from access to important sources of wealth, remains *dependent* for its revenues on the taxes which it must levy directly and indirectly on a private economy. A fourth condition follows as a corollary of the other three in as much as the state must *legitimate* the whole system and its role within it.

As we know, Habermas has followed the Offe model quite closely. His crucial contribution is to add a more fully developed explanation of the cultural and normative conditions of this model of the *late* capitalist state.

For Habermas the 'political-administrative system'—i.e. the state—is one of three subsystems in the larger system of late capitalist society. The other two are the 'economic subsystem', or the ensemble of capitalist enterprises, and 'the socio-cultural subsystem'. The three sub-systems together with the inter-relationships between them are represented in the diagram below.[19]



Steering performances
Social welfare performances
Economic system (Capital)
Political-administrative system (The state)
Socio-cultural system (Shared attitudes, values, traditions, expectations, etc.)
Fiscal skim-off
Mass loyalty

To maintain stability the state must, again, as in the Offe formulation, legitimate the whole system and secure the assent, commitment, and 'mass loyalty' of the population. It must therefore provide social and welfare programs to guarantee basic security.

In *Legitimation Crisis* Habermas argued that late capitalist societies are vulnerable to at least one of four possible crisis tendencies as follows:[20]

Point of origin (sub-system)	**System crisis**	**Identity crisis**
economic	economic crisis	–
politico-administrative	rationality crisis	legitimation crisis
socio-cultural	–	motivation crisis

A crisis occurs if one of the sub-systems fails to produce in quantity and quality enough of what it must contribute to the whole. Thus if the economic sub-system (the ensemble of private capitalist enterprises) fails to produce enough goods and services there is an *economic crisis* in the relation between capital and state (presumably because there is then no longer revenue for the state to perform, as per Offe, its maintenance functions for capital and the system as a whole). If, on the other hand, the state is not able to maintain the necessary level of formal rationality[21] with sufficient 'rational' decisions then the system succumbs to a *rationality crisis* in as much as the inputs to decision no longer correspond with the decision outputs. One presumes that this will have a double effect: it would, first, leave capital without the necessary measure of calculability and predictability for its investment decisions. On the other hand this very failure would expose the more fundamental irrationality of a system which is geared to profit rather than to collective needs and would therefore result in the withdrawal of assent and loyalty which we recognise as a *legitimation crisis*. As Habermas concedes[22] the last case, of *motivation crisis*, is really part and parcel of a legitimation crisis because in this situation what fails are precisely those same 'action-motivating meanings' which make the system appear 'natural', 'real', and so deserving of our committed involvement.

The system is such that an attempt to control crises in one sub-system must result in the transformation and displacement of inherent contradictions into another. For example, an economic crisis could, hypothetically, be controlled with large handouts of state funds to shore up some key area of capital accumulation (the automobile industry or the banking sector, for example); but this may well both expose the partiality of the state towards vested capital interests and at the same time force an offsetting reduction of welfare spending and so increase the legitimation deficit. As Ronge notes:

> The question might emerge which side—accumulation (economy) or legitimacy (demands of the social system)—is the driving force . . . (in the development of crisis).[23]

He concludes that 'an answer to this may be impossible'. However, whichever side leads, the state remains caught in the pressures which then subsequently come from both sides as unsolvable conflicts that are displaced from one side to the other.

In a second and revised statement of his thesis Habermas still claims wide acceptance of his view that:

> There is today no disagreement concerning the structural risks built into developed capitalist economies. These have to do primarily with interruptions of the accumulation process conditioned by the business cycle, the external cost of a private production that cannot adequately deal with the problem situations it itself creates, and a pattern of privilege whose core is a structurally conditioned unequal distribution of wealth and income.

> *The three great areas of responsibility against which the performance of the government is today measured are then: shaping a business policy that ensures growth, influencing the structure of production in a manner oriented to collective needs, and correcting the pattern of social inequality.*[24]

These three 'risks', or inherent crisis tendencies, can be listed and paired as follows with the corresponding 'responsibilities', or imperatives, which the state must obey in order to maintain the legitimacy of the existing social order.

'Structural risk' or crisis tendency	**Basic 'responsibilities' of state** i.e. imperatives of state action necessary for the avoidance of crisis and the continuing legitimation of the existing structure
1 Interruptions to the capital accumulation process brought on at low points in the business cycle, e.g. threat of a 'fiscal crisis state'.[25]	State must shape a business policy that ensures growth (e.g. with allowances and tax concessions, or the provision of infrastructure such as power stations for aluminium smelters and privately owned steel mills).
2 Social costs and problems created by private investment and accumulation e.g. unemployment arising from migration of capital and from the spread of high technology.	State must influence production in a way which either compensates the disadvantaged and/or serves collective needs (e.g. through tariff protection, wages policy, and subsidies, etc.).
3 Structurally conditioned inequality and the unequal distribution of wealth threatens democratic norms of equality and reward for achievement.	State must correct the pattern of social inequality (e.g. assistance to disadvantaged ethnic, regional, and other groups and minorities).

Habermas argues that the likelihood of a legitimation crisis depends on the course of contemporary development on two sides.

On the side of the economic system it is clear that from the end, in the early 1970s, of the long post-war boom, production growth and profitability have passed into varying degrees of recession in all advanced capitalist countries. Moreover, structural changes in the world economy seem to preclude any return to what is seen as 'normality', i.e. sustained growth with low inflation and low unemployment. These changes have been accompanied in most countries with increasing demands upon the state for more favourable conditions of accumulation and a reduction in government spending in general and on welfare programs in particular.

On the other side, and with respect to his socio-cultural system, there is something close to universal agreement that the accumulated effects of modernisation and development have everywhere either produced or accompanied a decay of those older normative structures of Western capitalist societies which we variously understand as the 'public sphere', as 'ego-defining world views' (Habermas), as 'the controlling symbolic' (Rieff), or more simply as 'structures of meaning' or 'culture' (Bell, Geertz). The institutions which once sustained the older normative structures have largely broken up and no one denies that this has created new social needs and produced what Daniel Bell has called the 'revolution of entitlements'.[26] This has greatly augmented demands upon the state for welfare, security and support which cannot readily be met through other means.

Habermas' thesis is not weakened by the common accusation that recent events (such as Mrs Thatcher's electoral triumph or Mr Reagan's much vaunted economic recovery) give the lie to what are wrongly read as empirical predictions. It is clear that the theory attempts to explain the inner logic of endemic, long-term crisis tendencies and that it makes no simple predictions. Nor is it hurt by the more serious objection that there may, in effect, be no normative structures to set systematic limits and conditions on the actions and legitimacy of the state. These objections are founded on the assumption that consciousness, valuation, and public opinion are infinitely malleable and fated always to follow the 'imperatives of power augmentation': Habermas answers that this is an empiricist prejudice. However, he has felt obliged to agree that late capitalist societies do indeed demonstrate a surprising capacity to reduce the minimum level of normative consensus required to hold the system together.[27] This is achieved by such various means as the segmentation of the labour market (which reduces consciousness of the inter-dependence and common social basis of different occupations); the increasing privatisation of consumption within the family (which vitiates critical awareness of what now appears as the remote and external contradictions in the society beyond); and the use of other means (e.g. the media) which increase the tolerance of the system by fostering competitive individualism, instrumental attitudes, indifference or passive cynicism. It is not possible to specify the point at which these processes will leave society without sufficient community to resist disintegration; nor is it possible to predict whether the crisis would produce positive progress towards a more just and worthy social order or whether, on the contrary, it would occasion some regression to more authoritarian rule or to fascism.

Some of the criticisms are due to defects in Habermas' statement of his own argument. One defect of his work is the absence of any description of the likely processes and foci of the legitimation crisis. Nor do we have any clear picture of the dialectic which robs the state of its legitimacy. How precisely does the withdrawal of legitimation and the failure of 'action motivating meanings' impinge on the state? Where does the rot start? How is it manifest? Habermas deals only very broadly with the origins, structures and evolution of normative structures and no attention is given to what is, in my view at least, absolutely crucial to the whole argument of legitimation crisis as well as to the arguments of other authors who depend upon Habermas' formulation. What is missing here as in all of Habermas' works is a clear reckoning of how crises of rationality and legitimacy become manifest in the very place where they must, for the sake of the whole argument, have their greatest impact, i.e. *in the sphere of organisational behaviour*. Indeed Habermas' treatment of what happens to rationality and action in 'complex' or formal organisations is lost in his sometimes Parsonian analysis of institutions[28], buried elsewhere under redefinitions of the relation between forces and relations of production[29], and missed in a major work on communication, in the distinction between institutionally bound and institutionally unbound speech acts.[30]

Where then, and how, is a legitimation crisis most likely to appear? My own answer is that wherever it originates it must, on the logic of Habermas' own very persuasive theory, break out and find expression *in the organisational processes of the departments of the state, i.e. in the public service*. Some development and reformulation along these lines would greatly strengthen the theory by first of all co-opting those skeptical critics who argue as does Held that:

> What matters most is not the moral approval of the majority of a society's members – although this will sometimes be forthcoming, for instance during wars – but the approval of the dominant groups. Among the latter, it is the politically powerful and mobilised, *including the states personnel*, that are particularly important for the continued existence of a social system.[31]

We now know that, contrary to prevailing assumptions (as discussed in section one above) senior public servants are *not* mere executors and implementors of policies designed by elected politicians and that they are instead centrally involved in the creation and constitution of policy. This surely means that these higher public servants must experience the contradictions of late capitalist society in a very immediate way. Whereas the ordinary citizen has some considerable leeway in which to escape or buffer legitimation deficits, the senior civil servant's work is defined by the demand that he or she should somehow reconcile the collision between the 'steering imperatives' on the one hand and moral expectations on the other.

My own thesis, briefly stated, is therefore that these three 'risks' or crisis tendencies together involve a fourth which is never stated, namely:

Structural risk or crisis tendency	**Imperative**
4 Disaffection of senior state workers on a scale which threatens the coherence and adequacy of state services	The state must maintain and restore the morale, competence and commitment of its public servants

Part 3

In order to carry forward this line of argument we need to differentiate more clearly than Habermas has done between three different ways in which crisis tendencies can impinge on the organisational performances of the state. *Firstly*, we can visualise a situation which arises fairly naturally from the Offe model and the Habermasian version of a crisis led by an *economic* cum fiscal crisis. We can agree here with Offe and Habermas that in this situation it is the outputs of the state which are at issue (either because they fail to rehabilitate capital accumulation, or because they do not satisfy a rising minimum level of social needs). I shall argue below that this type of crisis appears in the organisational structures of the state as a *frustration* which comes upon its senior public servants, so to speak, 'from the outside in' either as negative feedback, excessive external constraints, or in the form of impossible demands. *Second*, this should be clearly differentiated from what is, for the public servant, the very different though complementary situation described below in which disturbances in the 'life world' (Lebenswelt) produce a crisis which arises *from within as a confusion, which disorients action*. *Third*, we must also point to the effects of contradiction on the *hierarchical structures* of power and authority through which action is formally co-ordinated.

Contradiction as frustration

Offe points out that it is relatively easy for the state to respond to well articulated and specific political demands where these can be met with a corresponding allocation of disposable resources as, for example, when women's groups demand that provision be made for women's refuges, or when war veterans demand free medical care. It is possible that the resources may not be available but there is still no reason to suppose that 'allocative politics' *per se* should present public servants with any major problems.

The real difficulties arise from conditions specific to late capitalism where the state must answer the demands of capital for the *production* of circumstances which will both advantage capital accumulation, and, more significantly, anticipate and head off risks to the profitability of capital enterprises (including those risks which accrue from cost-cutting and other such normal consequences of competition among rival enterprises). This puts the state, and *those of its higher public servants who make policy*, in a much more difficult position because, here, and in contrast to the easier tasks of simple allocation,

> the state does not respond to demands but, as it were, to *negative events*, namely, the absence or disturbance of an accumulation process. It is always easier to respond to positive demands: they can either be rejected or accepted. In a situation where one wants to *avoid* something, that is, where one *reacts to a manifest or anticipated danger*, there is *no clear-cut* course of action that would either be followed or rejected. Even though it is unlikely that the state as an actor is the only one who wants to avoid a certain condition, the state cannot afford to rely on the directions of action recommended or demanded by the most powerful (or politically dominant) groups in society; for to satisfy the interests of one group is one thing, and to restore the accumulation process as a whole is another thing, and it is by no means certain that the two will coincide. Consequently, the state has to devise decision rules of its own in a situation where the primary concern is to avoid disturbances of the overall accumulation process. The rules and laws that govern politics are not sufficient to solve this problem. An additional set of decision rules is required that determine *policies*.[32]

The report of Crozier et al. to the Trilateral Commission[33], on the 'governability of democracies' agrees perfectly with Offe's analysis of the problems which this situation poses for administrations. In principle, senior administrators have a choice of three 'logics of policy production': (a)bureaucracy, (b) consensus and (c) purposive action.

However these choices are illusory since centralised *bureaucratic* procedures of the strictly Weberian kind only work efficiently in the allocative sphere where there is less uncertainty and where simple tasks can be routinised and programmed against standardisable criteria. At first sight *consensus*, the 'round table approach', seems to offer more promise in as much as it explicitly recognises objective conflicts between contending demands upon the state. However the obvious problem here is that labour and capital have many basically contradictory interests and further that irreconcilable conflicts arise among the different 'fractions' of capital (monopoly, industrial, financial, export, rural, speculative, etc.) as well as among competing firms within the same capital fractions. The state cannot accept too many contradictory demands because this will both overload its own decision-making and planning capacities and/or further increase its own size and costs beyond the tolerance of the private sector which it is supposedly serving and upon which it always depends. It is also true that this consensus model tends to generate a 'vicious circle'[34] by inviting still more demands that it cannot satisfy. It may also give rise to a form of 'grassroots' decentralisation which commits different branches and units of administration to mutually contradictory policies to the point where overall co-ordination becomes impossible. The still more fundamental problem may be that consensus as a model for 'productive' state activity threatens the structures in a more fundamental way by allowing

> . . . a simultaneous determination of inputs and outputs by the clients of state administration or the recipients of benefits. Such a model of decision-making at least in its pure form, would mean that not only the logical and institutional distinction between politics and administration, but also the basic distinction between state and society, become negated. The authority to organise and decide upon productive state activity would reside in its clientele. The difficulties that such a loss of differentiation would entail for the ability of the state to function as a *capitalist* state are rather obvious.[35]

Owing to these strictures the state is forced to rely on the same *rational-purposive* (= 'goal directed', or 'instrumental') model of policy production as is typically used by large industrial corporations operating in a complex environment. It is here that the realities deny the great myth of the liberal and Weberian orthodoxy which has so thoroughly stamped common opinion and concealed the true nature of the problems and inherent frustrations of the makers of *public* policy: the great myth is, of course, that there is no fundamental difference betweem public and private business administration. We are led to believe that all higher administrative work is essentially the same and that, in either case, it is simply a matter of 'getting a job done' with good organisation, economy, planning, and ingenuity, etc. This obscures and denies the radically different relationships of private and public administrations with their respective environments, a difference which, as we shall see, becomes more apparent in the state's attempt to formulate 'productive' policies.

The principal difference is that the goals, and thereafter the means of the private corporation involved in commodity production, are framed against the objective requirements of a market whereas, in the case of a public administration, the premises of productive policies must rest instead on inherently unstable political compromises and/or the anticipation of future economic and political circumstances which are probably beyond reliable prediction and likely to give the lie to the policy even before it is in place. Business executives and higher public administrators inhabit the same complex of formal organisational structures but with respect to the successful production of policy, the similarity ends there. Providing business executives operate within the law they are free to select the means, e.g. manpower, expertise, and natural resources, in terms solely of their purpose and with little regard for the social, political and other costs of their choices. It is just this which public administrators *cannot* do.

Perhaps business corporations are not models of efficiency and high performance as the popular ideology would have us believe: no doubt a lot of business policy-making turns out to be little more than 'muddling through'. As everyone now acknowledges business policy is *normally* made and executed in conditions of considerable uncertainty which limit the logic of policy formulation to a kind of 'sacrificing'[36] which is always short of the optimum. However the ground rules for the formulation of policy in the two sectors remain fundamentally dissimilar. Business executives can, and must, as a condition for the survival of their enterprises, frame their policies with the confident expectation and the wherewithal to ensure that the organisation and control of production will obey the *economic* logic of the policy. This means that the policy can and must provide *stable criteria* for the:

(a) differentiation of tasks between branches, sections and units;
(b) the objective assessment of performances and cost-effectiveness of various units, branches, etc.;
(c) the resolution of conflicts between competing branches, units, and staff; and
(d) the clear demarcation of an organisational boundary to mark off corporate interests from other extraneous personal or social concerns.

None of these conditions for the successful formulation of policy are readily available to the higher public administrator.

Preventive health and public education are two areas which illustrate these points perfectly. We see for example that with respect to public education the goals are so diffuse as to constitute nothing less than total personality development. Even the most frantic attempts to pin assessment criteria to pseudo-objective 'standards' leave both the organisational differentiation between curriculum areas and the evaluation of teacher/school performance prey to a host of conflicting, arbitrary, and particularistic value judgements which generate all kinds of organisationally disintegrative pressures and give the lie to what remains of the utterly implausible view that productive policy in these areas can be made or explained in terms of the goal-directed or rational-purposive model.[37] The resulting frustrations are then aggravated by the unrelenting demands for the public administrators to give account of what they do in terms which do *not* fit their practice. These pressures serve to keep them in a position of permanent inferiority vis à vis the business sector for reasons which are by no means accidental.

These considerations suggest that, with the exception of straightforward allocative functions, the objective conditions under which policy must be formulated in late-capitalist society probably foredoom the higher echelon of public servants who make the policies (a) to some continuing frustration and failure, and (b) to the impossibility of adequately understanding this for themselves from within the logic on which they and the structures of public administration are governed. Moreover, there is then some reason to expect that the added strains arising from demands (for better steering performances delivered with fewer resources) placed upon the state in conditions of economic crisis could impinge more directly upon the senior administrators in such a way as to provoke among them a cognitive break with the established logic of the system.

Contradiction as the disorientation of action

Another fundamental difference between higher public, as opposed to private, administration is that the task of making policy in each of these two sectors depends on data of a very different kind. It is true, as we have noted, that the economic exigencies of a market provide business executives with stable goal orientations which are typically missing in public administration. But this is only one aspect of the more fundamental difference which is that policy-making in the business corporation is based on objectified behavioural knowledge—even market research uses all kinds of research methods to turn consumer preferences into observable behaviour. In other words, business executives are obliged to function like good positivists with a methodology which implicitly admits as valid data for their policy-making only those 'facts' which can be fully objectified or externalised and hence dissociated from their own acts of interpretation. Of course this is never completely achievable but that is what they will try to do and it is the key to the cognitive styles and operations which they will use to construct their organisational structures and practices. Although some areas of higher *public* administration (e.g. technical aspects of trade, defence) will be constituted in a very similar way this should not obscure the fundamental difference which is that policy making in the *public* sphere is very largely a cultural and social process inasmuch as the data for the policies are irreducibly made up from interpretations of meanings and collective needs which pre-suppose an identification between the policy makers, i.e. the public servants, and the citizens who will be the recipients, beneficiaries or objects of the policy. In other words the process of making public policy is a more phenomenologically transparent form of social action which pre-supposes and depends upon common membership of a social and cultural 'life-world' (*Lebenswelt*) that is in fact its sub-stratum and the basis of the organisational practices and structures through which it is articulated.

To see through the ideological veil of false science and 'technocratic consciousness' is indeed to recognise public policy as a 'social construction of reality' and as a process in the reproduction of the social order of capitalist society. The obvious corollary, so strikingly missed by Habermas, is that disturbances in the sub-stratum of this process must affect public servants and the making of policy *directly*—and not only indirectly through the failure of 'mass loyalty' or of 'action motivating meanings' among the wider population. Without discounting these wider effects we can in, the light of Habermas' general model below, briefly consider the consequences of disturbances in the three domains of cultural reproduction, social integration and socialisation upon the life and action of civil servants whose personalities and evaluative criteria are rooted, as are ours, in a common culture and a social class structure.

Crisis phenomena connected with disturbances in reproduction[38]

Disturbances in the domain of	Culture	Society	Person	Evaluative dimension
Cultural reproduction	Loss of meaning	Withdrawal of legitimation	Crisis in orientation and education	Rationality of knowledge
Social integration	Insecurity of collective identity	Anomie	Alienation	Solidarity of members
Socialisation	Breakdown of tradition	Withdrawal of motivation	Psycho-pathologies	Accountability of the person

All higher administrative work depends on a stable demarcation between (a) 'private' (ego)-identity and (b) 'public' (work)-roles, and upon the parallel demarcation between (c) the 'private' realm of informal social relations among friends, family, other citizens, etc. and (d) the 'public' *organisational* realm of formal relations among other officials and co-workers. These demarcations are in fact *the basic norms* which give force and stability to all the principles which organisations use to evaluate performance, resolve conflicts, and to divide and assign work. These norms, which are no less than the constitutive principles of what we know as formal organisation, are social and cultural constructs and must therefore be affected by disturbances in the reproduction of society.

Habermas' scheme suggests a number of ways in which these norms can break down. Inequality, social fragmentation and the increasing pluralisation of value orientations will undermine the public servant's belief both in public service *per se* and his/her own sense of mission. In this case there is a loss of motivation as the end-values of service-for-its-own-sake give way either to creeping doubts or to incommunicably abstract and unstable rationalisations of one's motives. We are here reminded of Weber's very ambivalent description of the (higher) official as someone who must take and obey orders in a spirit which can only be described as passionate neutrality. What Weber's bias never allows him to make explicit is that this 'neutrality' is something very different from the kind of unmoving and unimaginative indifference which we have been encouraged to associate with 'the men in the grey flannel suits'. Neutrality considered as a form of action is a much more fragile cultural achievement inasmuch as it is really the expression, in action, of a highly disciplined commitment to universalistic norms and principles.[39] If these norms are too heavily eroded by contradictions in the wider social order public service *per se* becomes an impossibility.

These same social disturbances will appear within the policy-making arena as conflicts over 'priorities' which then gradually become entrenched and manifest for what they are, namely the reflections of basic cleavages and class conflicts in the underlying social structure. As they become entrenched, disagreements over 'priorities' turn into conflicts between diverging intellectual and value orientations which must, at a certain point, overload the standard means which are commonly used to deal with them, i.e. selective transfer and exchanges of personnel, in-service education, the commission of outside 'management consultants' or the 'scientisation' of administrative practices with 'black boxes' and new R & D programs, etc. Endemic conflicts undermine the underlying substantive and procedural agreements that are necessary both for the making of policy and for new attempts to contrive pseudo-consensus through 'organisational development' and administrative 'rationalisation' and 'restructuring'. Policies are then likely to be too crude, too narrowly based and partial, or so closely geared to immediate issues that they lose wider coherence. This does nothing either objectively or subjectively to help the policy makers cope with another problem.

We have seen that in contrast with the private corporation public administrators have relatively few objective technological and economic criteria upon which to premise norms of demarcations between (ego) identity and (work) role and between formal and informal relations. In public administrations the structures of action have to be created and stabilised from within through a constantly ritualised objectification and confirmation of new conventions, guidelines, procedures, and regulations.[40] These processes are dependent upon a strong sense of collective identity and group solidarity which cannot easily be protected against disintegrative pressures of social and cultural fragmentation. One also notes at this point that collective identity and group solidarity—i.e. the constituents of the administrative structures—are further weakened by the importation of aggressive personnel practices which encourage competitive individualism in the name of 'achievement training' and the 'fostering of initiative'. As solidarity and collective identity weaken, public servants can only feel more vulnerable vis à vis both their masters (the politicians) and their clients. This encourages them to form protective alliances with outside groups and individuals and this, in turn, further reduces solidarity within by encouraging more in-fighting and the formations of new cliques and strategic alliances.

It seems appropriate to conclude this part of the discussion by noting the more specifically psychological corollary of disturbance in the reproduction of culture and society. Since the senior public servants who are most active in creating policies and structures must rely on processes of interpretation which unavoidably involve continual reference to their own experience and values, they will be particularly vulnerable to that form of normative disorientation which we recognise as 'anomie' (the root cause of all non-organically based psychological disturbance?).[41] Attempts to bury the resulting anxiety with more work pressure or with attempts at ritual conformity are then likely to fail.

Contradiction and hierarchy

So far nothing has been said explicitly about the manifestations of the motivation and legitimation crisis tendencies within the *authority and power relations* of the civil service.

In the table below I am borrowing from Denis Wrong's[42] eight forms of power only those which depend on the assent of the power subject. The six categories are given in the following scheme in which I have included what I take to be the motives for compliance and the limit to submission.

'Coercive' authority, the first case, is of little significance because senior public servants typically have security of tenure. It is seldom possible to explain their actions as a response to the fear of sanctions and so this category serves mainly to remind us that the control of higher officials is all the more dependent on other means. 'Induced' authority has only a limited relevance since direct personal rewards (i.e. personal promotion and fringe benefits) are very limited in the civil service—again the point is that public administrations are all the more reliant on a narrower range of controls which all have the distinguishing characteristic that, in contrast to the business corporation, they are *not* predominantly tied to utilitarian criteria but are instead almost entirely dependent on symbolic interaction. The first of these is legitimate authority in which compliance issues from the power subject's acceptance of the proper legal

Forms of Power

		Authority		Persuasion		
	Coercive	Induced	Legitimate	Competent	Personal	
motive for compliance	fear of punishment	desire for rewards	acceptance of *source* of commands of power holder	valuation of knowledge of power holder	valuation of personal qualities of power holder	power subject agrees in the light of own values ideas/attitudes ideas/attitudes
limit of submission to power	relative insufficiency of punishment	relative insufficency of rewards e.g. status security, money etc.	discredited jurisdiction	margin of knowledge	limit of esteem	unconvincing justification

jurisdiction of the power holder's orders. This form of authority cannot summon creativity or 'action motivating meanings'; nor can it pre-empt evaluative questions as to whether or not legitimately issued orders are *worthy* and deserving of compliance. It is for just this reason that legitimate authority is susceptible to fragmentations and contradictions in the normative structures. 'Competent' authority is Wrong's term for the authority of expertise inasmuch as compliance depends on the power subject's evaluation of the power holder's knowledge. This is important since it is now abundantly clear that the crisis of the state brings contradiction and instability to those very criteria on which policy makers are obliged to judge what can and cannot count as valid knowledge. There is therefore a very direct impact on the authority relations through which state action must be co-ordinated. 'Personal' authority is Wrong's more secularised version of Weber's 'charismatic authority'. This form of power is of course extremely dependent on the very kind of ethically grounded identification between power holder and power subject that is pre-empted by any underlying breakdown of the normative order. Much the same is true in respect of persuasion which succeeds only in so far as the power subject's attitudes and values agree with those which underlie whatever it is that he or she is being urged to accept. In the consultative forms of relationship which predominate among higher public servants persuasion is perhaps the most important means of creating the commonality of purpose and orientation that is needed to maintain coherence over time and across different areas of activity. Like the other forms of co-ordination that are most applicable to *higher* public administration, persuasion is also highly susceptible to disintegration of the value complexes of late capitalist societies.

The first section of this paper sought to identify and to dispel a paradigmatic blindness in the prevailing view of higher public servants. The purpose was to clear the way for a more realistic sociological appreciation of senior bureaucrats as members of society and hence as social actors with intellectual and value commitments that are by no means immune to crises in the political, economic, and socio-cultural structures of the larger society. In short this initial discussion takes a first step in writing society back into the public servant. The task of the second session was again to correct a curious omission by writing public servants into the theory of the state in late capitalist society. Finally, the third part of the paper relates the crisis of the late capitalist state and its antecedents to the experience of higher bureaucrats.

I have not argued that crisis is imminent but rather that it is immanent in the structures of society as they are presently constituted. We may or may not be heading towards a full blown legitimation crisis. Indeed this may be unlikely since the state clearly has many effective ways of buffering its crises—as examples, one points to such practices as exchanges of executives between the public and private sectors, changes in personnel and promotion policies, alteration in recruitment policies for higher public servants, and the selective use of variously constituted 'task forces'. Whether or not such strategies can produce the necessary degree of integration is open to debate. What this paper affirms is only that integration so won must have its own costs and limits because the civil servant is no more infinitely malleable than is the society or the relation between the two: cultures and social structures always impose their own inflexibilities upon the field of action. In other words I have tried to show that the difficulties faced by higher public servants are by no means gratuitous or accidental occurrences which can be taken one at a time and solved in an entirely pragmatic way. The thrust of the discussion is that these difficulties are above all patterned phenomena which demand systematic and critical sociological explanations. Without this understanding we condemn ourselves to the incomprehension with which everyone—on the left, right, and centre—now views the very people whom we all agree are our new masters and mistresses!

Notes

1 That is principally Britain, America, Canada and Australia. The scope is limited to these countries because the civil as opposed to common law traditions of the other European democracies make further generalisation difficult. The same problem arises with respect to the very different cultural inheritance of Japan.

2 I mean comparable in the most conventional sense of (a) numbers of subordinates under their direction (b) level of decision-making in the executive hierarchy (c) relative magnitude of financial responsibility, etc.

3 This is generally true of all seven advanced capitalist democracies (Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States) studied by Aberbach et al., *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*, Harvard Uni. Press, 1981.

4 As empirically demonstrated by Aberbach et al. in the seven nation study. The same findings would almost certainly apply to Canada and to Australia under the Fraser government.

5 In the 100 years from 1870 to 1970 the British Civil Service grew from 50 000 men and women to 800 000. See Aberbach et al. op. cit. p. 2.

6 Aberbach et al. op. cit.

7 M. Walzer, *Radical Principles*, Basic Books, N.Y., 1980, p. 42.

8 Aberbach et al. op. cit. See especially the introduction and Chapter 8, 'Energy and equilibrium in the policy process'.

9 From Richard Rose, *The Problem of Party Government*, Free Press, New York, 1974, p. 422 and quoted in Aberbach op. cit. p. 14.

10 Boris Frankel, *Marxian Theories of the State: A Critique of Orthodoxy*, Arena Publications Monograph Series, No.3 Melbourne, 1978, p. 14.

11 *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, New Left Books, London, 1975, p. 132.

12 Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, eds. Guenther Roth and Clau Wittich, Uni. of California Press, 1978, Vol.3, pp. 1402-3.

13 Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, op. cit. p. 1401.

14 As quoted by Aberbach et al., op. cit., p. 6 from Diamant, *The Bureaucratic Model*, p. 80.

15 M. Weber *Economy and Society*, op. cit. Vol.3, p. 1404.

16 Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, op. cit. p. 1404.

17 J. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, trans. T. McCarthy, Beacon Press, Boston, 1975, and also Habermas' 'Legitimation Problems in the Modern State' and his *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, trans. T. McCarthy, Beacon Press, Boston, 1979. Michel Crozier et al., *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*, New York Uni. Press, 1975. 'The Problem of the Capitalist State', Nicos Poulantzas and Ralph Miliband in *Ideology in Social Science*, ed. Robin Blackburn, Fontana, 1972. R. Miliband *The State in Capitalist Society*, Quartet Books, 1973. N. Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, London, New Left Books, 1975; Bob Jessop, 'Recent Theories of the Capitalist State', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 1977, Vol.1, pp. 353–73; Boris Frankel, *Marxian Theories of the State*, Arena Publications Monograph Series, No.3, Melbourne, 1978; J. O'Connor, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*, St Martins Press, N.Y. 1973. L. N. Lindberg et al., *Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism*, Heath & Co., 1975; C. Offe, 'The theory of the capitalist state and the problem of policy formation', and 'Introduction to legitimacy versus efficiency' both in Lindberg et al., op. cit.

18 C. Offe, 'The theory of the capitalist state and the problem of policy formation' and 'Introduction to legitimacy versus efficiency', both in Lindberg, Alford, Crouch and Offe (eds.), *Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism*, Heath & Co., New York 1975; C. Offe, 'Crises and crisis management: Elements of a political crisis theory', *International Journal of Politics*, Fall 1976, pp. 29–67; C. Offe & V. Ronge, 'Theses on the theory of the state', *New German Critique*, No.6, 1975, pp. 137–47; C. Offe, 'Political authority and class structures (1972)', reprinted in P. Connerton (ed.), *Critical Sociology*, Penguin Books, London, 1976, pp. 388–421; and C. Offe, 'The abolition of market control and the problem of legitimacy' in *Kapitalistate*, Nos 1 and 2, 1973/74, and J. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, Beacon Press, Boston, 1975, and 'Legitimation problems in the modern state' in his *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, op. cit.

19 *Legitimation Crisis*, J. Habermas, op. cit. p. 5. The 'translations' in brackets are my own additions.

20 *Legitimation Crisis*, J. Habermas op. cit. part 2.

21 Formal rationality in exactly the Weberian sense of the level of calculability and predictability or 'systematisation' offered by the structures.

22 See Held's challenge and Habermas' reply in, *Habermas: Critical Debates*, (eds) J. B. Thompson and David Held, Macmillan, 1982.

23 Volker Ronge, 'The politicization of administration in advanced capitalist societies', *Political Studies*, 22, March 1974.

24 *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, J. Habermas, Beacon Press, Boston 1979, p. 1944.

25 As per J. O'Connor in *The Fiscal Crisis of the Capitalist State*, op. cit., 1976.

26 Daniel Bell, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, Heinemann, London, 1976.

27 Habermas' answer to his critics in *Habermas: Critical Debates* op. cit., p. 281.

28 In *Legitimation Crisis*, op. cit., pp. 6, 138–41, in which he gives only a few paragraphs to planning theory, policy analysis and organisational rationality.

29 In 'Historical materialism and the development of normative structures' in *Communication and the Evolution of Societies*, op. cit.

30 In his formulation of universal pragmatics, Chapter one, 'Communication and the evolution of society', op. cit., pp. 38–9, 60, 62.

31 David Held in *Habermas: Critical Debates*, (eds) Thompson & Held op. cit., p. 189. My emphasis added.

32 C. Offe, 'The theory of the capitalist state and the problem of policy formation', in L. Lindberg et al. op. cit., p. 133.

33 M. Crozier, S. Huntingdon, & J. Watanuki, *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission*, New York Uni. Press, 1975.

34 This is Crozier's thesis in *Crisis of Democracy* op. cit., pp. 16–17, and earlier in *The Bureaucratic Phenomenon*, M. Crozier, Chicago, 1964.

35 C. Offe, 'The theory of the capitalist state and the problem of policy formation' in L. Lindberg et al., op. cit., pp. 139–40.

36 See Herbert Simon, *Administrative Behavior*, Free Press, New York, 1957, pp. 38–40 and J. G. March & H. Simon, *Organisations*, Wiley, 1958.

37 Viviane Marquez, 'The production and reproduction of society: An organisational perspective'. Paper presented at X World Congress of Sociology, Mexico City, August 16–21, 1982.

38 From Habermas' reply to his critics in *Habermas: Critical Debates*, (eds) Thompson & Held op. cit., p. 279.

39 These norms provide the basis for such principles as equity, accountability according to responsibility, universalistic treatment, etc.

40 The ritualisation of structures, principles and regulations is also a celebration of collective identity and a medium through which it is created.

41 This is the central claim of such various and influential neo-Durkheimian authors as Philip Rieff, *Triumph of the Therapeutic*, Penguin Uni. Books, 1973: Anton C. Zijderveld, *The Abstract Society*, Allen Lane, 1972; Jerome D. Frank, 'The bewildering world of psychotherapy', *Social Issues*, Vol.28, No.4, 1972.

42 Denis Wrong, *Power: Its Forms, Bases and Uses*, Chapters 2 & 3, Blackwell, Oxford, 1979.

Source: M. Pusey, 'Senior public servants and the crisis of the late capitalist state'. Paper presented to the Department of Political Science, RSSS, Australian National University, Canberra, November 1983.

4

Education, community and the crisis of the state*

Richard Bates

Modern industrial societies (whether Left or Right, East or West) are facing four interrelated crises which collectively produce an historical situation comparable in importance to that which precipitated the French Revolution. These four crises are identified by Habermas as those of economics, rationality, legitimacy and motivation (Habermas, 1976, 1979).

The symptoms of the economic crisis are evident to us all. The structure of that crisis is also becoming clear. The problem is essentially that the logic of capitalist production (whether private as in the West or State as in the East) is based upon the continual accumulation and concentration of capital. This involves the substitution of capital intensive for labour intensive means of production which increases rates of return by lowering labour costs and allows increased market penetration and control. The outcome is the historical boom and bust cycle of business to which has been added more recently, chronic and persistent inflation accompanied by overproduction. Currently the application of a new means of production (micro-chip control of production processes) is facilitating an additional structural change in employment and displacing very large numbers of people from the production process. The result at the moment is chronic instability, continual inflation, overproduction, and large-scale transformations of employment structures including substantial casualisation and displacement of labour within and between nation states.

The second crisis — that of rationality — results in part from the economic crisis. As the state is called upon to intervene in the economic crisis in order to support and enhance the processes of capital accumulation and concentration, two things happen. Firstly, the rational planning models developed by the state in response to the crisis impose unwanted controls on the logic and operations of capital, even as the state attempts to serve these interests. Secondly, as the state can only provide the support demanded by capital by increasing taxes there is a corresponding fall in the rate of private capital accumulation. Thus the very activities (rational planning and intervention to ensure stability) that are demanded by capital contradict the logic of the 'free market' and restrict the rate of capital accumulation. A "rationality crisis" emerges as incompatible demands are made and responded to.

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The third (legitimacy) crisis arises from another set of incompatible demands. The state has not only to serve the demands of capital but, at least in a democracy, has also to maintain the mass loyalty of the populace. This is typically done through the provision of welfare services such as education, health, social services, mass transport, entertainment and so on. But these cost money and, beyond a certain point, are regarded by capital as unproductive luxuries, i.e., they divert funds from the process of capital accumulation and concentration. Thus the economic system increasingly demands the reduction of the costs of such services. When this reduction is attempted the basis of political consent and legitimation is threatened as taxes increase and services are simultaneously reduced. If government fails to manage this crisis of legitimation, the penalty is the withdrawal of mass loyalty and the collapse of the democratic mandate.

The fourth (motivation) crisis results from an awareness that the rhetoric of capital and state and the reality of social and economic life are increasingly contradictory. Initially individuals are motivated to involve themselves in the production process because they believe (a) that their achievements will be judged through a process of fair competition, (b) that individual striving is the best guarantee of the public good and (c) that rewards will be distributed via 'the market' according to both individual achievement and contribution to the public good. As people lose faith in 'the market' as a fair and impartial mechanism of distribution; as they acknowledge that some aspects of the public good (i.e., the reduction of pollution) can only be achieved by collective action; and as they come to regard the effects of unbridled and unrewarded competition and achievement as destructive, they lose their motivation for involvement in and support for the production process that is central to capitalism. Moreover, as government is less and less able, because of the increasing demands of capital, to maintain social services, motivation is further reduced. Again, as the technical solutions proposed by the state either avoid or fail to address serious conflicts of value a motivational crisis emerges.

The cumulative effect of these crises is frequently called the "crisis of the state". It might also be called the "crisis of community" for, as I shall show, the development of the institutional structure of contemporary society which has contributed significantly to the emergence of the present crisis has been accompanied by the administrative destruction of community. Moreover, as I shall also show, the current crisis is capable of satisfactory resolution only through the modification of institutional structures by the principles and processes of community. Education systems have contributed significantly to the current crisis. They are capable of contributing significantly to its satisfactory resolution.

The Crisis and Education

Education systems are heavily implicated in the contemporary crisis of the state. It could not be otherwise, for education systems typically (a) provide trained manpower and produce technical knowledge for the economic system; (b) are convenient mechanisms through which the state may attempt to demonstrate its rational control of economic events through manpower planning and the 'fine-tuning' of the ratio of public/private spending; (c) are important agencies of socialisation through which the political and economic order is legitimated and (d) are crucial in the development of motivation and commitment to the young. Thus all four crises involve education systems in a direct and vital way.

Now, while I do not intend to deal comprehensively with these crises, I would like to examine two aspects of fundamental importance. The first is the nature of the sustaining rhetoric which has legitimated educational policy and practice for the past hundred years or so and its contemporary collapse, and the second is the administrative destruction of community which has taken place behind the shield of this rhetoric.

The Sustaining Rhetoric of Education

As Michael Katz has suggested 'Public schools were created to alleviate major behavioural problems and to shore up a social structure under stress' (1980:78). In other words, as the breakdown of communal life accelerated under the pressure of industrial and urban revolutions, schools, along with hospitals and prisons, were increasingly used as mechanisms of social control. The early public schools were, by most accounts, orderly enough despite class sizes of sixty, seventy or sometimes, as in the case of the monitorial systems, hundreds of pupils. Even under these conditions 'Violence and disruption did not pose serious problems, and pupils generally accepted the authority of teachers.' (Katz, 1980:85). Nonetheless, orderly schools and docile pupils, though they may well have established the preconditions for the emergence of the bureaucratic state, did little to alleviate the social problems that were so often used to justify their establishment.

> Despite a massive expenditure of funds and a recurrent attempt to use the schools to alleviate social pathology, little connection ever existed between the extent of public education and the amount of distress and disorder in social life. (Katz, 1980:78)

Despite this apparent disjunction between the rhetoric of the schoolmen and the ineffectiveness of their panacea, the basic and enduring structure of public education was established in less than half a century in the U.S.A., Europe, and Australasia, a truly swift and remarkable accomplishment. The accomplishment of such an elaborate and ubiquitous institutional structure in such a short time cannot be understood if it is viewed as a unique phenomenon. In fact, what was occurring in most industrialising countries during this period was a progressive structuring of social, economic and cultural life into what Max Weber called the 'iron cage' of the bureaucratised institutional society.

In the vanguard of this movement, as Bledstein (1976) and Larsen (1977) have pointed out, were the emerging professions who laid claim to the rhetoric of science and to expertise derived from secret knowledge of what kept the social, as well as the natural world going. Here Max Weber suggested, the processes of classification and taxonomy that had been so successful in mastering the natural world were progressively applied to the bureaucratisation and hierarchisation of social life.

The establishment of institutional hierarchies created new divisions in social structure which were quickly exploited by individuals eager to occupy the upper echelons of the new middle class. As Katz points out, it was these hierarchical institutions which created the new classes: managers and managed, and it was by no means accidental that 'Among the first chief executives of the institutional state in the nineteenth century were school superintendents and superintendents of insane asylums' (Katz, 1980:82). Both schools and insane asylums and, as Foucault (1979) points out, prisons too, were to be managed according to the principles of classification, hierarchisation and control that had apparently been so successful in the worlds of science and industry. As a result, institutional structures emerged devoted to the management of both individual and society. Through this process, the legitimating rhetoric of scientific order and control was added to the claim that education could ameliorate social pathology.

The third characteristic of the rhetoric that sustained and legitimated institutionalised education during its first century was the rhetoric of innate inequalities in ability and motivation. The extraordinary racism and xenophobia associated with early 'scientific' measurement of psychological ability has been explored by Clarence Karier as has the close association between the growth of the testing movement and major industrial corporations (see Karier, 1972). But whatever the sources of such procedures, the rhetorical outcome of such activities, as they have been incorporated into schooling, has been a major contribution 'to the legitimation of inequality ... through teaching children to blame themselves for failure' (Katz, 1980:80). The result of this persuasion was a significant (if unconscious) lesson in political economy : the unequal distribution of ability.

Thus, before the end of the nineteenth century, mass education systems were established throughout the Western world on the basis of rhetorical appeals to their claims to ameliorate social pathology through moral training; to provide a mechanism for the scientific management of youth as a precursor to the scientific management of society; and to identify, classify and stratify the members of mass society according to their 'innate' differences in ability and their appropriate status as managers or managed.

As Callahan (1962) has argued, this rhetoric was aggressively pursued by the emerging profession of educational administration whose 'cult of efficiency' legitimated the extension and consolidation of the bureaucratic control of education and whose claims to impartiality and professional expertise allowed the management of education to be defined as apolitical thus insulating the emerging institutional structures (and the administrators) from local political interference (Iannaccone, 1983).

By the middle of the twentieth century, these trends had been consolidated and education had become typically the largest single item of government expenditure (excepting in some cases, defence). This expenditure increasingly supported vast numbers of teachers, administrators and educational professionals in an increasingly comfortable middle class life. They became, if not managers, then at least assistant managers. This massive enterprise was sustained by what Marvin

Bressler called the "conventional wisdom of education", that is, the belief that

> Social change can be controlled by the application of disciplined intelligence ... the educational process is the only alternative to stagnation or revolutionary violence. It is the duty of education to preside over gradualistic change toward a more perfect expression of the democratic tradition. (1963: 181-2)

Just how the progressive segmentation of society into managers and managed and the hermetic separation of these status groups from each other through the structures of bureaucratic institutions were related to the more perfect expression of the democratic tradition was a question left unasked. The post-war period was, in fact, dominated by visions of social progress engineered through planned governmental intervention in and direction of social and economic investment. If society was, in fact, a rationally ordered and 'democratically' manipulable system of roles and responsibilities, then surely the precise, scientific specification of inputs combined with technical procedures of control of both natural resources and human motivation could produce controllable outputs that would serve generalised social and political aspirations (Kogan, 1979).

Education was seen to be crucial in this process. As Halsey points out, during the 1950's and 1960's it was widely believed that

> the maturing industrial societies were moving steadily towards meritocracy and certification, as the principles of occupational placement in an ever-more productive and efficient economic system of perpetual growth ... Education, it seemed, was playing, and was destined still more to play, a crucial role in the formation of a more affluent and perhaps classless society. (1977:126-7)

In the optimistic economic and political climate of this period education was thus seen to be a means of both individual and social salvation. What could be more motivating for administrators, teachers, pupils, parents and politicians alike than this doctrine of social progress through education and its associated credo of unlimited hope? As Bressler suggested

> ... the credo of unlimited hope performs a useful function for education. For the Professor or school-man who sights the promise of individual and social salvation, the school becomes the Church and work a calling. In a profession where frustration and failure are common, the ideology of mass education revives professional energy and protects children against the comfortable cynicism and apathy that might otherwise afflict their teachers. (1963:83)

Education was therefore fundamental to the creation of what David Tyack (1974) calls the One Best System and the centrality of its contribution was a major motivating mechanism for educators who were caught up in the creation of a new society, a new vision of the social order. The destruction of the older social order was of course a necessary concomitant of this new vision. The destruction of the older communal structures of local custom, of religion, of kinship, of geographical stability, were seen as a small price to pay for the benefits of the new world.

The specific contributions of education to the development of the One Best System lay in its claim to the identification, nurturance and promotion of a wide diversity of talents from whatever social, racial, or religious background they came. The inhibiting effects of class, religion, race (and latterly, gender) on talented individuals were to be abolished through a system of equal educational opportunity linked to a system of equal and open occupational opportunity. The formula for the transformation of society was that of the meritocracy (Young, 1958).

The public tasks of education systems were, therefore, to identify and develop talent (measured by, among other things, I.Q.); to seek and encourage motivation and aspiration; to rank individuals to the hierarchy of social and economic opportunity on the basis of credentials and certification. Such procedures were essential in the creation of the One Best System in which traditional forms of class, racial, religious and sexual repression were to be overcome. Education was fundamental in the production of equal opportunity within an expanding, rationally planned and ordered society in which constant growth would provide the means for the more equal distribution of affluence and the elimination of human want, misery and the dead hand of tradition.

For the thirty years following the Second World War, the combination of system planning and meritocratic justification provided a powerful sustaining rhetoric for education: a rhetoric which encouraged and sustained the participation, motivation and commitment of individuals at all levels and assured education of government funding, administrative competence, teacher professionalism, pupils' application and parents' aspirations alike. That rhetoric, the rhetoric of the One Best System, is currently in a state of collapse. And it is collapsing, not because schools have failed to increase the technical performances of children, nor because schools have failed to devise comprehensive systems for the identification, quantification and certification of talent, nor because schools have failed to appropriately select and allocate students to differing social futures (indeed, they have succeeded better than anyone expected in most of these tasks — see Levin, 1978; Rumberger, 1981; Iannacone, 1978; Bates, 1981a, 1981b, 1982b), but because of several different factors that have become increasingly clear during the late 1970's as the Crisis of the State intensified.

The Collapse of the Sustaining Rhetoric

Three aspects of the current crisis directly challenge the sustaining rhetoric of mass education systems. These challenges are not specific to education as an institution, but originate in a wider challenge to the legitimacy and effectiveness of institutional meritocratic society as a whole. However, the centrality of education in the structure of institutional society ensures that experience of education is a significant source of disillusion for many and that education is subsequently a primary target for the expression of that disillusion.

The first challenge to the sustaining rhetoric of the institutional society derives from the observation that the gap between the aims and the achievements of government planners has grown to immense proportions. Indeed, in most areas of government policy, the *promises* of greater affluence, equality, opportunity and freedom have been matched in recent years by achievements of precisely the opposite kind: lower disposable incomes for the majority of the population, greater unemployment, increased divergence between the opportunities and wealth of rich and poor and increasing constraints on civil liberties (see Theophanus, 1979; Evans et al., 1982; Sawyer, 1982).

Gross inequalities in the distribution of wealth are increasingly recognised as being paralleled by similar inequalities in the distribution of cultural resources such as education. Thus, in education, as elsewhere, the question is increasingly asked: how is it that the defence of such inequalities takes precedence over the principles of equity, justice and opportunity by which the One Best System was justified? The difficulty of answering this issue lies at the heart of the crisis in legitimacy faced by governments in most Western countries (see Habermas, 1976; Weiler, 1981, 1982).

The second problem is allied to the first, that is, the majority of people are beginning to realise what minority groups have known for a long time: that schools do not offer any significant chances of upward social mobility for very many people, because such chances are related, not to education, but to the structure of the labour market and the politics of privilege. Indeed, despite increasing rates of school retention and higher rates of graduation and certification, youth unemployment and underemployment is increasing. This is because, as Levin (1981), Rumberger (1981), and Edwards (1979) point out, the reorganisation of the workplace to substitute capital for labour and the deskilling of both blue and white collar jobs through the utilisation of technology has taken place at precisely the time when schools have been producing more and better-educated potential workers. Once again the impact of this revolution in the workplace has been felt most by minority groups. Indeed the progressive segmentation of the workforce has occurred along rigid class lines with strongly associated ethnic, age and gender stratifications also involved (see Edwards, 1979; Gilmour & Lansbury, 1979; Windschuttle, 1980).

The third major problem relates to an alteration in consciousness, that is, the proclaimed justice of the meritocracy has been shown for what it is — a sham. For, while claiming to offer opportunity to all, the principles of individual competition and the false presumption that all begin the competition with equal handicaps have been increasingly recognised to demand the converse. That is, as Ken McKinnon said in a recent interview, "the general expectations of schools and the general way they are presently set up is for failure for a large majority. That being so, they achieve their task very well". (Bates and Kynaston, 1983). In saying this McKinnon echoes the conviction of many educators who have been increasingly concerned at the negative and destructive effects of schools on a substantial number of their pupils. Bennett sumarises the issue:

> Schools teach two principal things, *competition* and *failure*. First they teach that society is a competition and that schooling itself is a competition; the latter is simply a preparation for the former. Secondly, they teach that in these competitions most people fail; and as Neill, Holt and so many other progressive teachers have claimed, they teach people to fail. Even though it

> is the fear of failure which motivates them — the 'essential nightmare' as Henry (1972) calls it — so also most of them must learn to accept the inevitability of failure. And as most of those who fail are the children of the less privileged and will themselves in turn become the less privileged, 'educational institutions', as Bernstein suggested, 'legitimise social inequality by individualising failure'. (1982:179)

Thus in the area of its proclaimed expertise, the school, through its structures of curriculum and pedagogy, but most of all through its structures of evaluation and allocation, achieves the opposite of its proclaimed ambitions; success for an already advantaged minority is bought at the expense of failure for an already disadvantaged majority.

Such criticisms are not, of course, confined to analyses of the education system but are directed at most of the social agencies of the organisational society. Education has been, however, a particular target because of its centrality and importance in the promotion of talent, its production of motivation and commitment, and its legitimation of the ideology of the One Best System. Thus, it should not be surprising to find those who were disappointd at the apparent gulf between myth and reality asking whether "the real goal of education is not the 'maximisation' of everyone's potential, but only the potential of the few — the elite or ruling class". (Carnoy, 1972:2)

It has been commonplace among both liberal and radical critics of education systems for several decades now that education systems tend to reproduce rather than ameliorate social inequalities. Indeed, how could it be otherwise when education is so closely geared to the divisive structures of bureaucratic society?' The striking aspect of the current situation is that, as Katz points out, 'the contradiction between the promise of institutionalised policy and its results finally has begun to penetrate popular consciousness' (1980:85). The immediate consequence of this realisation is a series of attacks on the institutional structures of education ranging from physical attacks on teachers and administrators, to attempts to employ legal process to hold schools accountable for the delivery of the results their rhetoric promises. As Katz suggests:

> Serious attendance problems, physical assaults upon students and teachers, and the need for police to patrol school corridors : these developments signal not only a failure of traditional modes of ensuring order but a broader refusal to accept the authority of social and political institutions. Students who riot have not learned docility, reliability, and restraint. They have not learned to accept the unequal distribution of power and rewards with grace and a fitting self-effacement. In the same way poor parents who have attempted to make schools legally responsible for the achievement of their children have rejected a fundamental premise of the system : individual responsibility for failure. By their demand that schools actually teach, they are making a powerful political protest which strikes directly not only at schools but at the ideology of mobility which has legitimized the structure of inequality ... (Katz, 1980:85)

The collapse of the sustaining rhetoric of education is linked therefore to the collapse of the legitimating rhetoric of institutional society and to the developing crisis of the state. The effects of this crisis are not theoretical. They are concrete and immediate and range from the increased hostility between pupils and teachers in the classroom, through vandalism to school property and legal challenges to school administrators to governmental hostility towards an institution that is failing to maintain the engineering of consent that is fundamental to the continued legitimacy of the institutional society.

The Iron Cage of Bureaucracy

The task of reconciling individuals to the increasingly rationalised structures of economic and social life is a central problematic in most social and administrative theory. The question is frequently seen as that of harnessing individual motivation to the efficient pursuit of politically or managerially determined goals. The rational organisation of collective action in pursuit of such goals has been a major preoccupation of managers and bureaucrats for some time now (see Hoy & Miskel, 1982; Silver, 1983). Indeed the apparent solution of this problem through the development of large scale burreaucracies is widely regarded as one of the major achievements of the modern world. For instance, Weber, in his analysis of the increasing scope and power of bureaucratic organisations in the modern world asserted that 'Bureaucracy is *the* way of translating social action into rationally organised action' (1968, p. 987).

Weber, contrary to popular mythology, was neither the inventor nor an advocate of bureaucracy. Indeed, he saw, in the unfettered pursuit of rationally calculated means to ends determined by 'dominant interests', the creation of an essentially mechanical world unfit for human beings. 'Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly, the more it is "dehumanised", the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business, love, hatred, and all personal, irational and emotional elements which escape calculation' (1968, p. 975). Weber viewed the resulting 'iron cage' as a terminal world whose inhumanity would lead to a final, 'mechanised petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance' (1958, p. 182).

The most extreme form and perfect example of the resulting iron cage is, of course, the totalitarian society which achieves social, economic and political rationality through the forcible subordination of individual interests to the interests of 'the state'. The mechanical petrification and convulsive self-importance of such states is abundantly clear in current totalitarian regimes of both right and left which are surely the antithesis of community.

The major objection to such states is usually the extent of force required to ensure submission to the 'rationality' of the state. But as Huxley (who shared Weber's vision) suggested in his introduction to *Brave New World* (1946)

> A really efficient totalitarian state would be one in which the all-powerful executive of political bosses and their army of managers control a population of slaves *who do not have to be coerced, because they love their servitude*. (Huxley, 1980, p. 12, emphasis added)

The creation of loving serfs, or to give it a title of greater self-importance; the engineering of consent is one of the great tasks facing the controllers of the iron cage. It is a task given, says Huxley, 'to ministries of propaganda, newspaper editors and school teachers" (1980, p.

12). The task is that of socialisation.

Clearly all societies, all cultures, socialise their members into certain patterns of value, belief and conduct. Socialisation is an inevitable concomitant of social life. However, the socialisation demanded by bureaucratic organisation is radically different from that of most cultures, societies and communities in that it is directed towards the effective *depoliticisation* of both organisational members and clients. That is, as Hummel (1982) suggests:

> In bureaucracy, administration replaces politics. Not politics as the decision-making core activity of society — bureaucracy increasingly makes the central decisions that govern public and private life — but politics as the participatory activity of citizens co-operating or fighting with one another to work out solutions to public problems. (Hummel, 1982, p. 185)

In the process the essentially public process of political argument and decision 'is replaced by the purportedly apolitical decision-making of the managerial few ... the public, those affected by the decisions, is systematically excluded from the process' (1982, p. 185).

This fundamental de-politicisation of the public is a key feature of the socialisation process demanded by bureaucratic organisations in their construction of the iron cage. Indeed, as Denhardt (1981) suggests, the specific form of socialisation required by such organisations is becoming a generalised feature of organisational society.

> The result of this (organizational) socialization process is the widespread assumption of a particular viewpoint, a sort of organizational ethic, one which supports the extension of an organizational society and offers itself as a way of life for persons in our society. To the extent we accept that ethic, we will come to see the world in terms of order and structure rather than conflict and change; we will come to value discipline, regulation and obedience in contrast to independence, expressiveness and creativity. And we will see the world in terms of techniques for resolving inconveniences in the smooth and efficient administration of human affairs. What is especially important is that this new ethic of organization does not just instruct our activities in organization (as do theories of organization); rather, its power is so great that it recommends those same patterns of thought and behaviour for our lives generally. (Denhardt, 1981, p. 5)

Thus, socialisation into organisational bureaucracies and more generally into the organisational society is significantly different from socialisation into most other historical forms of social, cultural or community life. This is because, in bureaucracies, the scope for political action as a public expression of personal meaning and commitment is both reduced and restricted to the managers. The opportunity for meaningful action by individuals is therefore significantly appropriated and substituted by the hierarchy of organisational control. This produces, at the individual level, a paradox: the *meaning* of individual action is frequently contradicted by the *rationality* of organisational demands. As Denhardt suggests:

> The dilemma faced by the individual seeking a context for meaningful action is that, as the continued bureaucratization of society displaces earlier political, vocational, and religious concerns, the individual is left with few opportunities to engage in actions outside organized systems. The problem with this ... is that organized systems are inherently based around notions of regulation and control. This means that the organized individual is

> placed in the contradictory position of attempting to pursue meaningful choice within systems of regulation, a result that is both confounding and alienating in its impact. (Denhardt, 1981, p. 8)

Thus the 'rationality' of bureaucracy produces a profoundly irrational situation for the individual who, moreover, is prevented from pursuing public and political solutions to various dilemmas by the avowedly apolitical nature of the range of organised structures which are the only possible structures through which he can approach the organisational society. It appears that the central problem with which social and administrative theory has been concerned for the past two hundred years — that of reconciling organisational efficiency with personal motivation and commitment through bureaucratisation — has reached an impasse.

The individual irrationality produced by bureaucratic, institutionalised societies not only depolitices people, it also demoralises them. That is, the restriction of decision-making power to those in charge of the organisation both de-politicises the majority of 'functionaries' and 'clients' and, simultaneously, absolves them from moral responsibilities — provided that they obey the rules. The result is the production of what Berger, Berger and Kellner have called *The Homeless Mind* (1974). Advanced industrial rationality destroys the protective "sacred canopy" of meanings and leaves the contemporary mind "homeless" in an indifferent universe. This is the result of accepting the instrumental, objectified, depersonalised logic of bureaucratic operations in which, contrary to the philosopher Kant's insistence that people must be treated as ends in themselves rather than simply as means, individuals are treated in a purely functional manner. Thus, as Hummel points out:

> Students become the 'products' of universities. Workers become the 'tools' of management. Individuals holding roles within an institution become subsystems performing functions within a system — 'functionaries'. And clients become 'cases' or things. (Hummel, 1982, p. 41)

In the end, as Weber's terrifying vision of the reality of bureaucratised society suggested, the inhabitants of the iron cage become 'specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart', yet, ironically, 'this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved' (Weber, 1958, p. 182). The cumulative effect of the Iron Cage of the Institutional Society is to de-rationalise, de-politicise and de-moralise the individual.

The creation of the Institutional Society — this 'level of civilization never before achieved' is therefore dependent upon not only the administrative destruction of community but also upon the transformation of individual consciousness and experience so that community members become institutional functionaries or cases for treatment. Hummel's (1982) extended analysis of Weber's famous essay on bureaucracy identifies five major transformations of consciousness and action associated with the development of the organisational ethic. Bureaucracies, he says, demand transformations of our previous historical and biographical experience in five areas: social, cultural, psychological, linguistic and political.

> Bureaucracy gives birth to a new species of inhuman beings. People's social relations ae being converted into control relations. Their norms and beliefs concerning human ends are torn from them and replaced with skills affirming the ascendancy of technical means, whether of administration or production. Psychologically, the new personality type is that of the rationalistic expert, incapable of emotion and devoid of will. Language, once the means for brining people into communication, becomes a secretive tool of one-way commands. Politics, especially democratic politics, fades away as the method of publicly determining society-wide goals based on human needs; it is replaced by administration. (Hummel, 1982, p. 2)

Thus the quest for order and control which justifies the bureaucratisation of the modern world ends up producing an inherently irrational situation which destroys the very humanity it pretends to serve. Indeed,

> the rational model of administration may assist in efforts at prediction and control in the interest of efficiency, but it cannot provide an understanding of the meaning of organizational life or a critique of its limitations. Moreover, where the rational model serves as a model of appropriate human action, it provides an extremely limited view of the individual, especially with respect to the question of moral consciousness. Finally, since the rational model inherently serves the interests of social regulation, it cannot aid in the individual's search for autonomy and responsibility. Yet these are just the issues which must be resolved in order for persons to explore new ways of relating to one another as they share in the tasks of life. (Denhardt, 1981, p. 123)

It seems clear from such analysis that the institutional structures of bureaucracies, as they have so far developed in modern society, totally deny any concern with fraternity. The iron cage of bureaucracy excludes the consideration of the personal relationships individuals have with each other, the quality of the social life they share, and the moral claims they have on each other. If these considerations are fundamental to the nature of community then what we have done in our pursuit of a manageable society is to engineer the administrative destruction of community. Indeed, the most significant effect of the emergence of organisational society may well have been the destruction of common values, experience, and commitment over the whole range of human action that once served at a local level to produce a coherent and comprehensible view of the social world and to sustain individual participation in it. How could it be otherwise when organisations derationalise, de-politicise and de-moralise their members by wrenching them away from their cultural roots — those systems of shared values, ideals and ways of living that are the essence of community? For the bureaucracy, as Weber (1968) noted, imposes norms of precision, stability, discipline, reliability, calculability, rationality, impersonality and formal equality thus submerging and denying the norms that traditionally govern social life.

So what is to be done that we may celebrate fraternity and assert the importance of the personal relationships that individuals have with one another, the quality of the social life they share and the moral claims they have on each other? In my view two things are fundamental. We need, firstly, to demystify organisations and secondly, to so modify the processes of organisational life that organisations become participative structures responsive to human needs. Schools are good organisations to begin with because of two facts: one, schools are only loosely coupled to their administrative environment; and two, the educational relationship is necessarily and fundamentally participative.

Demystifying Organisations

One of the curious aspects of our contemporary analysis of organisations is that the analysis reifies bureaucracies at the same time as it despairs of their consequences.

The first step in demystifying organisations is, therefore, to reduce such reification and acknowledge that because organisations are created they can therefore, presumably, be *re*created; that is, to recognise organisations as works of the *imagination* despite their often very concrete external appearances. Ernest Becker argues, for instance, that in organisational life, as in the wider sphere of social action

> Man's answers to the problem of his existence are in large measure *fictional*. His notions of time, space, power, the character of his dialogue with nature, his venture with his fellow man, *his primary heroism* — all these are embedded in a network of codified meanings and perceptions that are in large part arbitrary and fictional. (Becker, 1971, p. 56)

We are entitled to ask, therefore, whether the rational model which organisational theory presents as an accurate and persuasive model of human action is, in fact, an acceptable fiction. There are increasing doubts among mainstream organisational theorists as to the validity of the received wisdom of the social sciences. For instance, Perrow has this to say:

> Neither social scientists nor people in general are as smart and rational as they think they are. Social scientists mask this reality by desperately trying to make sense of many things that are really quite senseless when examined closely. Yet they convey the impression of lawful, even rational behavior because of research techniques that are largely self-serving. Social scientists have constructed fictions, such as the idea of personality or character and the notion of evolutionary change, to hide the disorder of our everyday existence and the unpredictable nature of human history. (Perrow, 1982, p. 684)

Indeed, it is not difficult to suspect that it is this very disorder in the affairs of men that provokes the attempt to explain, predict and control the world. But while positivistic science has been immensely successful in applying the logic of causation and control to the domination of the physical world, the transfer of such explanation and action to the social world has been much less successful. In part this is because of the unpredictable nature of human behaviour and in part, as we have noted previously, to the objectionable moral consequences of organisational hierarchies. But these objections have not prevented the transformation of the logic of physical science into the fictions of social science. Taking the example of organisational goals as a key construct in organisational theory, Perrow has this to say:

> The idea of organizational goals is one of our most powerful order-giving constructs and one of the best ways to impose a reality upon our everyday workspace. (But) the notion of goals may be a mystification, hiding an errant, vagrant, changeable world that will never make more than a .3 corre-

> lation in social science research ... Do organizations have goals, then, in the rational sense of organizational theory? I do not think so. In fact, when an executive says, 'this is our goal', chances are that he is looking at what the organization happens to be doing at the time and saying, 'Since we are all very rational here, and we are doing this, this must be our goal'. Organizations, in this sense, run backward; the deed is father to the thought, not the other way around. (Perrow, 1982, p. 687)

Thus the notion of ordered rationality serving organisation goals may well be a fiction that is downright misleading in an attempt to understand organisations. It seems proper therefore to ask what purpose such a fiction might serve. Or rather *whose* purposes it might serve.

Organisational theory and organisational purpose

Without suggesting a conspiracy theory, Perrow suggests that in general

> ... the problem the organization is mandated to deal with, and the methods of dealing with it, are formulated on the basis of elite consensus about how the system should work. Poverty is the responsibility of the poor; deviant behaviour is defined as such by elites even if the deviants do not see it as deviant; solutions must come from help to the poor, rather than a restructuring of society, and so on. (Perrow, 1978, p. 113)

Thus, in the process of maintaining the interests of the elite consensus,

> It would not do for the executive of an agency that purportedly is helping the poor to seek a massive redistribution of wealth in the community by taxing the rich heavily and giving it to the poor, or cutting the salaries of highly paid officials and using the money to create jobs for the poor, in, say, renovating slum housing; to investigate inefficiency and corruption in other agencies so that they might give more help; or organise the poor into an effective political force that would remove elected officials or even restructure the government. These are all possible solutions to the problem, but they would not conform to the expectations of the present system — thus, solutions, such as they are, must not disturb the system, even if the system might help cause the problems. The sensible executives know this quite well: indeed so well that they often are not aware that they know it. (Perrow, 1978, p. 113-4)

Perrow therefore agrees with Weber who saw bureaucracy operating dispassionately and remorselessly to serve the interests of dominant elites. Indeed as Salaman (1981) points out, the whole doctrine of the rational pursuit of organisational goals serves to gloss the coincidence of organisational and class structures. As Perrow again suggests

> ... our efforts at giving accounts and attributing rationality serve the elites much more than they serve the majority of the people. These efforts create a world in which technological necessity, organizational hierarchy, profit goals, and so on become legitimated. They reduce the space for the ordinary mortal to move around. (Perrow, 1982, p. 688)

Reducing the space for the ordinary mortal to move around is an inevitable outcome of an organisational fiction based upon premises of explanation, prediction and control of the social world. The issue of control is paramount. But while the task of explanation and prediction in the physical sciences allows (indeed, is devoted to) control of inanimate, or at least non-human objects, the utilisation of a similar model in the social world can only mean the control of the majority of ordinary mortals by (invariably self-serving) elites. Thus the fiction of the rationally ordered bureaucracy, neutral, apolitical and dispassionate in its pursuit of neutral organisational goals can be seen to be, on the one hand, a probably inaccurate representation of a disordered social and organisational reality and, on the other, a fiction that serves minority interests (those of the managers) while simultaneously reducing the space for ordinary mortals (the managed) to move around. This being, so, it seems likely that the mass of ordinary mortals might well find an alternative fiction more acceptable, especially if it was one which presented a model that made better sense of their experience and was committed to increasing rather than reducing their control over their own destiny.

Towards an alternative fiction

Such an alternative model is rapidly emerging in the theoretical worlds of social theory, public administration and education. It is a model that draws on two major theoretical traditions: those of phenomenological analysis and of critical theory. Phenomenological analysis is based on a fundamental distinction between the objectives of the natural and social sciences. While the natural sciences adopt an instrumental approach to the causation of phenomena in the physical world, social sciences are regarded as being additionally concerned with understanding the ways in which humans attach meanings to their actions. In contrast to the explanation of the behaviour of physical objects (which can often be objective, deterministic and predictive) the phenomenologist argues that the intentionality of human action introduces the possibility of creative, even unique, responses to experience. As a result of this basic understanding of the difference between the predictable world of the physical sciences and the implictly unpredictable world of the human or social sciences, phenomenology is much better placed to understand and explain the apparent disorder of the human world that Perrow argues frustrates the polite fiction of organisational rationality.

The task of critical theory is complementary to that of phenomenological analysis. That is, it is the purpose of critical social theory to explicate and penetrate the rationalisations and justifications (ideologies) which sustain the apparent regularities of social life.

> It is the task of critical social analysis to cut through these justifications, or ideologies, and to establish the regularities of social action which lie beneath the surface of our relationships. In turn, the critique permits us to see relationships of dependency and submissiveness which have previously been concealed; it sets off a process of self-reflection in which we begin to comprehend our true condition (unfettered by ideological constraints). To engage in serious and unconstrained self-reflection leads to self-knowledge — and guided by self-reflection, we can engage in responsible social action. (Denhardt, 1981, p. 113)

Thus, in contrast to the instrumental model of the physical sciences (and the traditional model of bureaucratic organisations) a model of social action is being developed that both takes account of the unpredictable results of human intentionality and offers a method of critical social analysis that allows us to penetrate the ideological constraints of the social world in which we live. The preceding discussion of traditional organisation theory is an example of such critical social analysis.

An educative democracy?

It hs been argued by Fay (1975, 1977) that this form of critical analysis makes possible an alternative model to the instrumental relationship between theory and practice employed by traditional organisational science. Fay calls this alternative the educative model. Its intention is to provide people with an understanding of their own lives, that is, of their needs, of the social conditions that prevent the fulfilment of those needs and ways in which their lives, and the social system, might be changed so as to increase the chances that their needs will be met. According to Fay:

> Both the instrumentalist and the educative models promise freedom; but in the former it is the freedom that results from knowing how to achieve what one wants, whereas in the latter it is the freedom to be self-determining in the sense of being able to decide for oneself, on the basis of a lucid, critical self-awareness, the manner in which one wishes to live. In the educative model, the practical result of social theory is not the means for greater manipulative power, but rather the self-understanding that allows one's own rational thinking to be the cause of one's actions: i.e., social theory is a means towards increased *autonomy*. (Fay, 1977, p. 207)

It is not accidental that Fay should call the alternative to the instrumental model educative, for, as Connell et al. have pointed out, 'Education has fundamental connections with the idea of human emancipation, though it is constantly in danger of being captured for other interests' (1982, p. 208). The educative model, you will notice, implies not only critical examination of the manner in which one wishes to live but the undertaking of action in a social context which furthers the achievement of autonomy. Such a process inevitably involves concerns with the personal relationships individuals have with each other, the quality of the social life they share and the moral claims they have on each other. That is, the educative relationship is essentially concerned with issues of both individual and communal emancipation.

The thrust of the educative model is clearly in opposition to the functional model which informs the institutional society and supports the division of community into managers and managed. The educative model demands forms of participative democracy where individuals and communities command both the technical means and the moral ends of action. This is a singular contrast to contemporary forms of representative democracy which assume that most people are not capable (for one reason or another) of making decisions and that consequently elites have to be elected to make decisions for them (Margetson, 1980). The recovery of community rests very much therefore on the retrieval of the practice of participatory democracy.

How is this to be done?

I have suggested earlier, following Renwick (1975), that community is characterised by three things (a) the personal nature of the relations individuals have with each other, (b) the quality of their shared social life, and (c) the moral claims people have on each other. I have also argued that the administrative destruction of community was historically based upon the de-rationalisation, de-moralisation and depoliticisation of individuals and the transformation of their social, cultural, psychological, linguistic and political consciousness through the rhetoric of the One Best System, into the hierarchical structures and processes of the institutional society. Mass education and the form of educational administration historically associated with it was an essential ingredient in the development of the resulting technology of control (see Bates, 1980, 1983). What we have achieved in the institutional society — the Iron Cage of Bureaucracy — is, therefore, the very opposite of community. What would seem to be needed is a revocation of the principles and practice of bureaucracy and a return to the practice of community. But the restoration of the Golden Age of the small scale rural village seems to me impossible of achievement (Bates, 1975). We cannot return with Maui to the womb unless we wish to share his fate. The only possibility is not the destruction but rather the colonisation and transformation of the Iron Cage — what might be called the communalisation of the institutional world.

Communication and Community

It is not accidental that the words community and communication share the same latin root, as communication is the essence of community. Indeed, it is the distortion of communication in bureaucratic organisations that is claimed by Habermas to be the major disabling mechanism that frustrates the celebration of community within the structures of Institutional Society. Indeed, many organisations appear to deliberately distort communications as a mechanism of domination. They obscure the power of vested interests, manipulate trust and consent, twist and restrict available knowledge and thereby limit possibilities to those serving the manager's interests. Presumably, administrators who are committed to the ideals of community, of a participative, emancipatory educational democracy will see the correction of these disabling distortions as a major objective of their practice. Democratic interaction is indeed dependent on the elimination of such distortions in communication. As Watkins (1983) suggests the aim of a truly educational administration, like the aim of critical theory, should therefore be

> a life free from unnecessary domination in whatever form and which should be implicit in every act of communication. Individual emancipation is achieved through collaboration, sharing knowledge, reaching agreement through reciprocal understanding within a common accord and mutual trust. (1983:22)

In other words, individual emancipation (the ideals of liberty and equality) can only properly be achieved within the context of community and through processes of undistorted communication. What frequently inhibits such achievement are distortions of communication due to the violation of Habermas' (1979) four norms of 'universal pragmatics', that is, through incomprehensibility, insincerity, illegitimacy and untruth. Watkins (1983) has suggested (following Forester, 1980) that such distortions can be identified and to some extent rectified.

Such common practices as: the mystification of issues and the exclusion of parents and public through the use of incomprehensible jargon; the misrepresentation of the public good through the giving of rhetorical assurances that disguise motives; the attempt to impose rationalisations through professional prestige and dominance; the withholding or obscuring of policy possibilities through the withholding of information. Indeed, as Watkins argues, what is needed is the development of techniques for penetrating such administrative distortions by parents and communities. One example of such techniques is provided by the *Parent Action Manual* (Andrews, 1982).

The development of such techniques both in terms of self-defence and in terms of critical self-reflection is essential if the Iron Cage of the Institutional Society is to be colonised and transformed into something approaching our ideals of community. As Watkins suggests such transformations set a clear agenda for administrators:

> The implications inherent in the overcoming of any administrative distortions of communication are that educational administrators need not only technical administrative skills but also political and social skills demanded by the environmental pressures impinging on the organisation. Consequently, the educational administrator needs firstly, to combine and integrate technical skills with open, democratic participation; secondly, to use and develop community skills and resources rather than pre-empt them; thirdly, to harbour the growth and support of diverse interest groups who may incorporate a critical element into decision making processes and lastly, to be aware of the larger structural and social changes taking place at the international and national level which when manifest at the local, practical level may affect claims of legitimacy and truth. In this way a critical social theory of educational administration recognises that education organisation must be viewed not as mere technical systems but as settings where people engage in communicative interaction. (Watkins, 1983:25)

The reestablishment of the principles of community within the structures of institutional society can be seen therefore to be basically dependent upon the transformation of the distorted communications that allow forms of administrative dominance that de-rationalise, de-moralise and de-politicise people. The forms of action that result from the establishment of undistorted communication will celebrate the meaning of community more effectively than an attempted return to the romantic and unattainable nostalgia of the rural village. But such a celebration will not be achievement without cost. Firstly, the traditions that have dominated educational administration and furthered the development of the technology of managerial control are challenged by the ideals of community. Many of us will find it difficult to relinquish the unquestioned authoritarianism of our professional status. Others will find the negotiations involved a source of frustration and inefficiency. Yet others will willingly adopt such techniques in modifying the hierarchy above them but resist all attempts of those below them to employ similar strategies of democratisation. But for those of us who are seriously committed to the ideal of community, to the issues of the nature of personal relations, of the quality of shared social life and the moral claims we have on each other, the adoption of such strategies is not only a technical preference but also a moral obligation. The alternative is indeed Orwell's 1984 and our involvement in the creation of an army of willing serfs, living happily in the Iron Cage of the Institutional Society.

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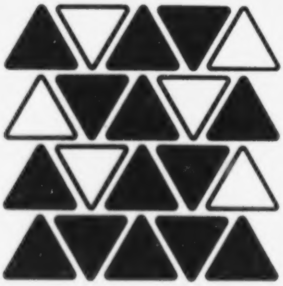

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This was one of the first post-war publications to question assumptions of the preceding 'orthodox' period of public administration. Dahl was particularly critical of the separation of normative considerations from the 'scientific' study of administration. He insisted that public administration in particular must be founded on 'some clarification of ends' and that public administration must also be founded on the study of 'certain aspects of human behaviour' viz. psychology. He also argued for a broader study of the social and behavioural sciences.

Heady, F. *Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective*. 3rd edn, Marcel Dekker, New York, 1984.
First published in 1966 this is a comprehensive compendium of orthodox approaches to public administration. Claims to be 'the first comprehensive effort to assess the state of the comparative study of public administration and to characterise the administrative systems in a wide range of present-day nation states'. Provides a fairly good but conventional coverage of its main topic.

Katz, D. and Kahn, R. *The Social Psychology of Organizations*. John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1966.
This is a key work in that it provides a major compilation of work in public and industrial administration drawn from the perspective of psychology and human relations. Noted as a classic in the field.

Likert, R. *The Human Organization: Its Management and Value*. McGraw-Hill, New York, 1967.
The other major influential book derived from the psychological and human relations tradition.

Lindbloom, C. *The Intelligence of Democracy: Decision-Making Through Mutual Adjustment*. Free Press, New York, 1965.
A spirited defence of the Institutional Model of administration, this volume argues that bureaucracies make decisions in incremental ways through bargains and compromises towards vague but generally agreed goals. This explanation is not only offered as an empirical account of the ways in which bureaucracies make decisions but is also argued as a normative account of the way in which they *should* make decisions in a democracy. Condemned by its critics as an excuse for ineffective decision-making strategies this is the initial statement of the virtues of 'muddling through'.

Simon, H.A. *Administrative Behavior*. 3rd edn, Free Press, New York, 1976.
Originally published in 1945, this is the classic behaviouralist statement of the 'science of administration'. Originally designed to be influential in public administration, it has probably had more impact in industry. After mounting a scathing critique of earlier 'orthodox' positions in public administration, Simon presents instead a theory of administration 'derived from the logic and psychology of human choice'. Responsible for introducing the theses of logical positivism and behaviouralism in an uncompromising fashion into the debate over public administration.

The new public administration

Frederickson, H. G. *New Public Administration*. University of Alabama Press, Alabama, 1980.

One of the more recent and comprehensive reviews of the New Public Administration, this volume places the movement in its historical context and stresses the continuity of the traditions of public administration in the United States as well as describing the new values brought into public administration following the Minnowbrook conference.

Marini, F. (ed.). *Toward a New Public Administration: The Minnowbrook Perspective*. Chandler Publishing Co., Scranton, Pa., 1971.
This is one of the three volumes of papers from the Minnowbrook conference. In his introduction Marini identifies the major themes of the conference as demanding increased relevance, a rejection of positivism, new forms of organisation, greater client focus and more attention to the environment of organisations.

Waldo, D. *Public Administration in a Time of Turbulence*. Chandler Publishing Co., Scranton Pa., 1971.
Waldo was one of the key figures in American public administration during the 1960s. He was editor of the *Public Administration Review* and the major force behind the Minnowbrook conference. This collection of papers presents a somewhat different view of public administration from that edited by Marini but comes to many of the same conclusions.

The crisis of the state

Habermas, J. *Legitimation Crisis*. Beacon Press, New York, 1975.
This volume presents the core of Habermas's thesis regarding the crisis tendencies of modern capitalism. It is a wide-ranging, synthetic work of considerable originality. Drawing heavily on the work of Claus Offe, Habermas embraces systems theory, phenomenological sociology and Marxism in his reconstruction of critical theory's analysis of capitalism. Essential, though difficult reading.

O'Connor, J. *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*. St Martin's Press, New York, 1973.
The first in-depth analysis of the budgetary mechanisms of the contemporary liberal state from a Marxist perspective. The 'fiscal sociology' that results is a persuasive model of the way in which public budgets are part and parcel of the state's steering mechanisms and how they respond to social, political and economic pressures from different class and occupational groups.

Offe, C. 'The theory of the capitalist state and the problem of policy formation'. In L. N. Lindberg et al. *Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism*. Heath and Co., Boston, Mass., 1975.
One of the key essays in the establishment of the theory of the crisis of the state. Argues that the state in capitalist society must obey three major conditions: *exclusion* from the 'natural' role of private enterprise in the production of goods and services for profit; *maintenance* of conditions favourable for private enterprise and capital; and *dependency* of its financial base on the taxes and revenues it must levy directly and indirectly on the private economy. The fourth condition of *legitimation* refers to the state's responsibility in maintaining and justifying the system as a whole and its role within it.

Alternative views

Aberbach, J. D., Putnam, R. D., and Rockman, B.A. *Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1981.
A major empirical study. Following a classification of the literature on the relationship between politicians and bureaucrats into four major 'images' ranging from Weber's strict separation to the contemporary emergence of a 'pure hybrid', the authors present the findings of a survey of the state of relationships between bureaucrats and politicians in Europe and America. Fascinating reading.

Fischer, F. and Sirianni, C. *Critical Studies in Organization and Bureaucracy*. Temple University Press, Philadelphia, Pa., 1984.
An innovative series of papers focusing on issues such as power, control, the choice of technologies, gender and class in organisations, relations between organisations and the larger political economy, organisational alternatives and workplace democracy. Studies are drawn from a large range of settings and present some of the best of current radical analysis as well as some traditional classics.

Kouzim, A.(ed.). *Public Sector Administration: New Perspectives*. Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, Vic., 1983.
A contemporary Australian analysis of various aspects of public administration, including critical essays on the politics of public sector administration, the mythology of public administration, the accountability of public service officials, women in administration, the administrative politics of dangerous technological development. A useful and provocative collection.

MacIntyre, A. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. Duckworth, London, 1981.
Perhaps a slightly odd entry in a bibliography of public administration. However, MacIntyre addresses much attention to the problem of managerialism and provides a fascinating (if not always convincing) account of the origins of the problem producing some interesting observations in regard to its possible solution.

Salaman, G. *Class and the Corporation*. Fontana, London, 1981.
A very useful discussion of three main figures in the theory of organisation (Weber, Durkheim and Marx) is followed by an excellent analysis of the structures of work organisation in contemporary firms and a conclusion that it is within such structures that modern work creates and sustains class differences. An important book.

Wilson, H.T. *Political Management: Redefining the Public Sphere*. Walter de Gruyter, Berlin and New York, 1985.
A book addressed to the remedy of the 'gap between political reality and political possibility, and the poor use that is being made of that resource for which politics and government exists and from which it requires its legitimation – the people'. Like MacIntyre, this is an original work which draws upon philosophy, political science, sociology, critical theory and many other sources in the attempt to formulate an alternative to the current marginal position of people in the political and administrative processes of liberal democracies. At times quite difficult but worth reading.

About the author

Richard Bates is Professor of Education (Social and Administrative Studies) in the School of Education, Deakin University. Prior to his current appointment, he was Senior Lecturer in Education, Massey University, New Zealand.

After completing teacher training at Wellington Teachers' College he taught in urban and rural primary and intermediate schools before returning to university to complete his degrees. Appointed to the School of Education, Massey University, in 1968 he was awarded a Nuffield Foundation Commonwealth Travelling Fellowship in 1976, part of which he spent at the London Institute of Education as a research associate.

Richard was involved in the establishment of distance programs graduate training in educational administration at Massey University and in the establishment of the New Zealand Educational Administration Society and the New Zealand Association for Researchers in Education.

Since his appointment to Deakin University, he has been responsible for the development of both Graduate Diploma and Master's programs in educational administration and for the development of the School's program of higher degrees by research. He is an active member of numerous national and international professional associations, and an editor and author of wide experience in educational professional associations and an editor and author of wide experience in educational administration, sociology of education and the relationship between theory and practice. His current preoccupations are the development of a critical theory of educational administration, studies of schools as negotiated realities, and research into policy formation and the organisation of education in Australia.

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p. 3 Heady quote reprinted from Ferrel Heady, *Public Administration - A Comparative Perspective*, 1984, pp. 407–8 by courtesy of Marcel Dekker, Inc., New York.

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